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Brewer, G. E., 1832-1922
A history of the Central
Association of Alabama

A HISTORY
—OF—
THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION

—OF—
ALABAMA.

—BY—
GEO. E. BREWER.

—FROM—
ITS ORGANIZATION IN 1845 TO 1895.

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• INTRODUCTION.

THE author, being possessed of the only file of minutes known to be in existence, and having been intimately acquainted with the affairs of the Central Association of Alabama from within a few years after its organization, has felt it a duty to preserve the records of this body in such shape that the successors of this noble band of Christians may know how the planting, development, and fruitage of this Christian assembly has been brought about under the providence of God. Beginning in 1836 he has briefly presented a bird's-eye view down to 1845, the time of organization; and then more in detail the progress to 1895. To those whose lives have been encompassed by these events, there will doubtless be interest, whether the author has had any of the skill of the artist or not, in presenting the picture, for their memories and feelings will touch with proper coloring and tints where he has failed. To others possessed of imagination, these inborn artists, will achieve for them what the author has failed in, because of the sympathetic interest they have in some characters here presented, whose lives are interwoven into their own.

Whatever may be the views of others, I have the consolation of knowing that my object has been to rescue from oblivion men and acts that are worthy to be remembered as long as noble aspirations for good, self-sacrificing devotion for mankind, and undying loyalty to Christ shall awaken admiration and love in human hearts. With this introduction receive the best bow of the author.

GEO. E. BREWER.

CHAPTER I.

CONDITION OF TERRITORY.

THE territory covered by the Central Association of Alabama has, with an occasional change, been that lying between the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers from their junction northward to what was the southern boundary line of Talladega county to 1870. At first the political divisions were that part of Montgomery county lying north of the Tallapoosa river, the half of Tallapoosa lying west and north of the river, and all of Coosa county. In the reorganization of the counties after the "War of Secession," Montgomery, Tallapoosa and Coosa counties were dismembered to form Elmore county, which was effected about 1870. Since then the association has embraced most of Elmore, the western half of Tallapoosa, and all of Coosa. About 1885 some three or four churches in the northwestern part of Coosa, not being in sympathy with mission work, withdrew, and went into the organization of a new body, called the Weogufka Association, and have since been detached from the Central. The Weogufka is put on the list of missionary associations, but ought not to be, for it is opposed to our missionary operations; to educating the ministry; to any translation of the scriptures but the "King James Version," believing it to be the original; and they extend a cool reception to visitors from missionary bodies. It ought to be classified with the Anties. With this exception, and that of a few churches in the northeastern part that went to the Carey, and two in the southern to the Montgomery, its territory remains the same.

This territory was sparsely settled by the whites until about 1832. Then the whites commenced a more rapid immigration, buying up the lands of the Indians. Speculators came among them and bought largely of their lands, and many of them being greedy of gain, cheated the Indians out of much of their possessions. This provoked them, and made them suspicious, and naturally awakened their hatred. Hostile feelings became manifest, and open hostilities began here by an Indian shooting down Jesse Suttle while at his own spring with his wife, who was washing her clothes. Suttle was an innocent victim, for another did the deed of cheating for which Suttle was unjustly killed, yet the warrior thought he was wreaking a just revenge. Suttle was the father of Judge I. W. Suttle, who was for so many years a member of the association and its moderator. Contention filled the whites for the safety of their homes, wives and children, and they fled to a few rude forts for the protection of their loved ones. The Indians were soon subdued by the government, and compelled to remove to the Indian territory in 1836. The country now rapidly filled with white settlers. Churches, schools, and other evidences of civilization began to take the place of the wigwams and play grounds of the red men.

These churches for a few years grew and enjoyed gracious refreshings from God. Some few of them united with the Mulberry association, an organization in the older settled part of the State, west of the Coosa river. Among these was Shiloh, with which the first session of the Central was held. Others entered no organization. The churches which early sprung up, besides Shiloh, were Smyrna, Bethel, Mt. Carmel, Fellowship, Weogufka, Elkahatchee, Union, Liberty, Bethlehem and Wetumpka. The ministers who preached among them were Elders Benj. H. Wilson, Jas. Eden, Joseph

Hill, Benj. Foscutt, Obadiah Radford, David Moore, and J. D. Williams. None of them were educated men except Williams, Foscutt and Wilson, nor did these possess more than a common one. The others were men of fair preaching ability for their day. They were of that native strength and ruggedness which characterized the pioneers of the times. For a while all moved on comparatively peaceably and lovingly. But the questions about mission boards, Sunday school unions, tract societies, and secret societies got among them and proved an apple of discord. These came from the east and gained momentum as they moved westward, and the discussion ripened into a contest as to whether mission or Sunday school work was in any sense of scriptural origin, or rather "a corrupting addition made by man to the work of the Master as assigned by Him to His churches." Behind the attack upon mission work was Jebe, of New York, a strong writer, and one who loved debate and contention. His weekly paper, "The Signs of the Times," waged constant battle. He magnified the sovereignty of God in salvation until he carried it into the realms of fatality. He was ingenious in his attacks on the "Boards" and "Societies" so as to catch the popular feeling, and arouse the spirit of loyalty to Revelation from God, so that reason should be blinded. He was likewise remarkably skillful in turning every unguarded and loose expression of the advocates of these institutions into a weapon with which to belabor them. The over zealous advocates of these institutions into a weapon for the display of his skill. An unguarded and unfortunate expression of the great Missionary Judson, uttered in enforcing an earnest appeal to his brethren to help the mission cause, served well the purpose of Jebe to attack all missionary enthusiasm as the outgrowth of the rankest Arminianism. He furnished the cudgels, and his sympathizers plied them lustily. The contest waxed warmer and warmer, so that it eventually became the theme of almost every pulpit effort. It pervaded the conference deliberations, making them jar with confusing debates. It was the topic around the fireside when brethren visited. In fact it overshadowed everything else among the members of the church, and outsiders aligned themselves also. Strong feelings of bitterness were engendered between the best friends and in family circles. Finally this broke fellowship, and led to the adoption, by the anti-missionaries, of the famous "non fellowship resolution," which declared against fellowship with the "Institutions of the Day," a Mission and Sunday School Boards, Tract and Temperance societies, Masonry and Odd Fellowship were called.

The missionary sympathizers at this time simply contended for the liberty of every brother or sister to contribute to missions, to attend or work in Sunday schools, to aid Tract societies, or to join the Masons, &c., as they might deem proper in the light of his or her own conscience. It was not then assumed, as now, that it is a great duty to give the gospel, or for sending the gospel, "to those in the regions beyond." This is a growth that has come upon the churches as they have more carefully studied the Bible upon it, and have put into practice the great duty and privileges. The anti-brethren were unwilling to allow such liberty, for they felt it was permitting their deluded brethren to partake of the "work of darkness" and evil, as they saw it. They argued that "brethren are to watch over one another for good," and deemed themselves guilty of sin not to prevent "their misguided brethren from being partakers in evil." Further, that if they could not turn them from that way, to remain in church fellowship with them was to become guilty themselves through association. It was seen that separation was all that could be done if there was to be any peace. In some churches the missionaries had the majority, in others the anti-missionaries prevailed. Whichever had the ascendancy held the house, records, and



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organization, while the others withdrew. In some cases they were fair enough to divide the value of the property proportionately. The missionaries and anti-missionaries then went to organizing rival associations.

CHAPTER II.

CHURCHES—PREACHERS—ORGANIZATION.

The anti-missionary churches formed an association named the Wetumpka, but the date of organization is not remembered. It was first a part of Beulah association. Elder Benj. H. Wilson called for a meeting of the missionary churches to convene at Shiloh church, in October 1845; and four responding, they proceeded to the organization with Elkahatchie, Liberty, Bethlehem and Union churches.

We will first take some notice of the preachers named, before entering upon the account of the body. The preachers named all sided with the anties except Wilson and Williams. Wilson was a man of moderate means, but owned a sufficiency of land and negroes to make a comfortable living. He was devout and earnest, of a gentle spirit, yet firm and unyielding where principles were involved. He was beloved of his people, and his preaching was instructive and unctious. His education was fair. His consecration to his Master was lovely.

Foscoe was a man of some education, a good property in land and slaves. He preached fairly well, and was a good talker, but would have been more influential but for the unfortunate habit of exaggeration.

Jas. Eden was uncultured, of fair piety, strong native intellect, deep convictions or prejudices, and naturally intellectually combative. So the strife of the period was not so distasteful to him.

Joseph Hill, though now advanced in life, having been born in 1770, had yet much vigor, some education, and a comfortable property. He was not as bitter as most with whom he sided in the controversy. He remained with the anties until about 1850, when he cast his lot in with the missionaries. Owing to his advanced age he did not labor much in the ministry from this time. He lived, however, until 1871, having sojourned here about 100 years. He was rather mild in disposition, was considered a good preacher, and maintained always the reputation of consistent piety. The others, except Williams, did not live long, and being called home by death before society and churches had passed the formative period, the writer knows but little of them.

Of the churches Elkahatchie was from the first, composed of men above the average of this section for mind, culture, and property, as well as liberality. For many years she gave more largely than any others to the enterprises of the denomination, and sometimes nearly half that was given. Among the leading members who shaped her course and gave the needed means, were Wiley W. Mason, Reuben Maxwell, his sons, Allen, Frank, and Willis, Lennard Marberry, Taylor, Seaborn Thomas and his sons, Wm. and Henry, Isaac Smith, Dr. Moon, Thos. Davis, W. M. Davis, Captain Walker, and Rev. Bright Skipper, long her pastor.

Liberty church in her earlier days was fairly liberal and useful, led by Milton Jesse, and Marion Russell, Lafayette and George Thomas, J. A. Robinson, and I. M. Thomas.

Bethlehem was always a weak church.

Union was next to Elkahatchie, and not far behind it for strength mentally and in liberality. While the Central Institute flourished in its vicinity it drew to the church a coterie that made it for the time the leading church. It had at this period seven or eight ordained ministers in its membership, Elder Jas. Jeter, Jas. Russell, Jos. Bankston, A. L. Holmes, B. L. Smith, Platt Stout, Bright Skipper, and W. B. W. Weston. Its permanent laymen were J. D. Letcher, Wm. Barnes, Wm. Reeves, J. A. Pylant, W. M. Lindsey, O. Swindal, and J. W. Bozeman. The latter, though a young man, was influential. He soon, however, about 1850, went to Mississippi, entered the ministry, where he took rank among her best and most influential preachers, filling some of her most important pulpits. He died quite recently, leaving vacant the pulpit of the 1st Baptist church of Meridian, the leading church of this flourishing city, where for fifteen years he had guided her wisely to the joy and profit of her cultured membership. The city paper in noticing his death, said "he was beloved by all the city old and young, and the poor had lost their best friend and the distressed their best earthly comforter."

Shiloh, with which the body met, was situated in Coosa county, about three miles north of Nixburg, in a good farming section. It was a stronger church in its early history than in later years. Among its membership were men of means and influence. Most prominent among them were Elder Joseph Bankston, I. W. Suttle, Stephen Ray, Kigdon Edwards, A. H. Kendrick, Asa Little, Peter Goggans, J. P. Goggans, — Wilton, and — Hardy. Stephen Ray was in its constitution, and still lives, and is still a member as he nears 90 years. He claims to be one of the oldest if not the oldest citizen of the State, having come to it 1814 from Tennessee. He came to Coosa about 1835. He can still perform manual labor. So Shiloh has now nearly a centennarian, and had one, Joseph Hill, more than a century old. This church belonging to the Mulberry, did not go into the constitution of the association, though she hospitably entertained it. The churches that met with her and formed the Central Association were Elkahatchie, three miles from what is now Alexander City, the leading church of which has absorbed the old mother; Liberty near Bulger's mill; Bethlehem, six miles north of Tallassee, all in Tallapoosa county; and Union at what is now Central, 12 miles north of Wetumpka, in Coosa county.

These delegates from the churches named, were kindly received and entertained by the brethren of Shiloh, and after two or three days of worship and deliberations gave birth to an association which they named the "Central," which for years was among the most influential and useful in the State. It is yet capable of much good, if properly aroused. The hearts of the brethren were drawn closer to each other by this union, and by the bitterness of the opposition.

Elder Benj. H. Wilson was chosen moderator, and was the only ordained minister present as a member. Wiley W. Mason was elected clerk. The Constitution, Decorum, and Articles of Faith under which the organization was effected was mainly such as is now usually printed with the minutes annually. The body adjourned to meet with Liberty church the following year.

1846.

The body met in its second session with Liberty church, on the 17th of October 1846, and continued the session for three days. Elder J. D. Williams preached the introductory sermon from Prov. 11:14. B. H. Wilson re-elected moderator, and W. W. Mason clerk.

Two churches united with this session, Hillabee and Friendship. Hillabee is northeast of Alexander City, near the large creek of the same name. After the formation

much of the remaining portion of the territory was "completely absorbed by antislavery influence," and appealed to other more favored parts of the State to help them evangelize this destitution.

Corespondents were appointed to the Alabama Baptist State Convention. A "Corresponding Letter" of affectionate tone was attached to the minutes.

The number of baptisms for the year was 53. Additions by letter 57; dismissed by letter 6, excluded 3, died 1. Total, 227.

Elder J. D. Williams, who preached the sermon of this session, lived at Wetumpka, and continued to do so, except for a short period in the neighborhood of Elkhatchie. He started a paper here in 1836, and the same year succeeded in getting a church constituted. He came from Virginia in 1834. He was born in North Carolina in 1800. He commenced preaching in 1818; married in Virginia in 1824; died Oct. 7th, 1870. Wetumpka church became a member of the Central Association in 1847. This made Bro. Williams a member of the body, which relation continued until his death in 1870. He was a regular attendant upon its sessions, taking an active part in all its work and deliberations, and wielded much influence. But for some peculiarities he would have been even more useful than he was. He did much in these early days for planting Baptist principles and churches in his portion of the State. He started the first Baptist paper in the State, and generously gave it to the Convention. He had two sons, Robert, who was the first manager of the Alabama Baptist, and now lives at Mr. Meigs, Ala., and Hon. Thos. Williams, of Wetumpka, who for several sessions represented the 6th Congressional District in Congress. The wife of J. D. Williams was a noble Christian woman of lovable character, and an earnest worker. She was baptized when the earth was wrapped in a mantle of snow. The same condition existed at her marriage. She had frequently expressed the wish that it might please the Lord to allow her to be buried with a white sheet of snow spread over the earth. Her wish was gratified, for during the noted snow of 1880 she was laid to rest in the cemetery of Wetumpka, beside her life's companion.

1847.

The session of this year was held at Hillsabee church, Tallapoosa county, from October 14 to 17. The anniversary sermon was preached by Elder H. H. Wilson, from Eph. 2:20. The session was opened by prayer led by Elder H. Van Hoose. Elder Wilson was re-elected moderator and Mason clerk. Four churches were added this year: Wetumpka, Harmony, and Good Hope all of Coosa county, and Goldville, of Tallapoosa county.

Wetumpka church was in the town of the same name, one of Indian origin, meaning in English "Roaring Waters." The name was suggested by the constant roar of the pretty waters of this beautiful stream, the Coosa river, as they poured over the mass of rocks forming the bed of the river for a long distance. They effectually impeded the further navigation northward of the many stambos which plied between this point, Mobile and New Orleans, from whence came nearly all the merchandise in these days. Wetumpka was quite a distributing point for a number of counties in Alabama, and some in Georgia. It was then about the third point in the State for business. Its streets were jammed with wagons for several months in the year. In 1840 its population was one third larger than Montgomery. It was a candidate for the capitol when removed from Tuscaloosa, but its rival Montgomery, secured the prize, and from then rapidly outstripped her in growth and prosperity. Some of the prominent names in this church, besides Williams, are its pastors Lundy, Van Hoose, McIver, Brewer, Figh, Taul, Skipper and Stout. Laymen, Hue, McWilliams, Terrell,

of the Carey it entered that association. Friendship was a weak church near Seacato in Coosa county. It afterwards became for awhile a church of some strength, and numbered among its members men of means and influence: the McKinnies, Harris and Patrick, Goodgame, Corbet, and Dred Thomas. The church finally went down about 1870.

Elder Williams was a correspondent from the Alabama Association, and Jas. M. Russell and Hugh Carmichael from the Liberty. Sunday was a day of spiritual rejoicing among Christians and religious awakening among sinners. Carmichael and Williams preached. By invitation of the church to the body, it partook with the church of the Lord's Supper.

The body was divided into two districts of three churches each.

Correspondents were appointed to the Alabama, Liberty, Coosa River, and Mulberry Associations. The churches were urged to establish and maintain Sunday schools; and the pastors were requested to preach once a year at least to their churches upon the duty of pastoral support, and contributing to missions, "especially domestic." The churches were also recommended to set apart Sunday afternoons of their regular meetings to the spiritual instruction of the slaves among them.

A resolution was also adopted approving the organization and objects of the Southern Baptist Convention, which was constituted the year before, 1845, at Augusta, Ga. The resolution expressed concurrence "in the necessity and wisdom of prompt and radical separation from our Northern brethren;" and to discountenance the exercise of Northern agencies among them for religious purposes.

Alabama was the mover in what led to the organization of the S. B. Convention. The Board of the Triennial Convention had refused to appoint some persons as missionaries who owned slaves. It was suspected that the trouble was that they were slave owners. The Alabama Baptist State Convention then addressed an inquiry directly to the Board of the Triennial Convention to know if they would appoint a slave holder as a missionary. The answer to the inquiry was "they would not." This was regarded as seriously discrediting the call to the ministry, and the fitness for the ministry of those who held or would hold slaves. Many of the best and most pious of the Southern ministers were slave holders, and nearly all would have been had they possessed the means to be. The almost universal opinion endorsed the scriptural right to own slaves, provided they were humanely treated. The answer given was therefore offensive to the general southern sentiment. This led to the call for the meeting in Augusta, Ga., in 1845; which gave birth to the Southern Baptist Convention. So the Convention and the Central were born the same year.

The "Alabama Baptist," a paper published at Marion, Ala., was endorsed, and patronage to it urged upon the brethren. This paper was first started at Wetumpka in 1836, by Elder J. D. Williams, under the name of the "Family Visitor," as a Baptist journal. About 1840 Williams gave, or turned over the paper to Gen. E. D. King and Milo P. Jewett at Marion. They published it as the "Alabama Baptist." Robert Williams, son of J. D., though a young man, was put in charge as publisher.

The committee "On the State of Religion" reported a gracious revival as having commenced with Union church, and which had reached Elkhatchie and Liberty, and its gracious influences had pervaded other churches not belonging to the body. The membership had more than doubled during the year. Bro. Wilson was pastor of the churches thus revived. The same committee also reported destitution of missionary preaching in the northern, western and southern portions of the territory; and that brethren ought to be aided in supporting a pastor. They also declared that

9. Renewed recommendations of the work of Domestic Missions; strict Sabbath observance; and religious instruction of the slaves.

10. Appointed J. D. Williams, Wm. Atkinson, and Jas. Jeter to visit churches in their bounds, and solicit them to unite with the body.

The following note from the minutes of Sunday's proceedings will show the spirit in which the sessions of these times were held.

— "SUNDAY, 11 A. M., (Oct. 17th 1847.

Pursuant to a previous resolution the association convened with the church at Hillabee for celebration of the Lord's Supper. In the forenoon, however, of the deep state of feeling in the church and congregation, it was determined to postpone the delightful privilege of celebrating our Savior's passion and death, and to engage in one united, fervent, and prayerful effort for the further outpouring of the spirit, and the salvation of sinners. Accordingly, Elder A. Van Hoose addressed a large, attentive, and serious congregation, as we trust, in the power of Elijah's God; and with the demonstration of His Holy Spirit. The stately steps of God were seen in the sanctuary: his children had refreshings from his presence, some that mourned in Zion were comforted; and many, *very many* sinners were made to inquire in their hearts 'men and brethren what shall we do.' Elder James Russell preached again at night, when a greatly increased interest was manifested in the church, and among sinners, and was finally closed amid the joyous tears of saints, and the lamentations of those who were not comforted because 'Christ was not formed in their souls the hope of glory.'

The report of the committee on the "state of religion," was a model in its matter, diction and spirit, as illustrated by the following extract from it: 'Let your watchword be onward, your aim cultivation of the whole field, and your end in view to erect the standard of the cross in every valley and on every hill and mountain top throughout your geographical limits.'

Number received by baptism, 28; letter, 52; restored 1; dismissed by letter, 50; excluded: 4 died, 3; total, 391. Contributed for Domestic Missions \$47.45.

1848.

This session was held with Friendship church embracing from Oct. 14th to 17th inclusive, 1848. The anniversary sermon was preached by Elder J. D. Williams from Rom. 10:13-15. The prayer at the opening of the business was led by J. M. Newman. Elder Wilson was re-elected moderator, Bro. A. Hatchett was elected clerk, Bro. Mason not being present. He was never a member of the association. Having been made Chancellor for the Middle Chancery Division of Alabama, he removed to Tuskegee. He was a noble layman, full of faith and good works, and a man of superior intellect, as indicated by being made a chancellor, and subsequently speaker of the House of Representatives. He never lost interest in the Master's cause because of his judicial and civic honors, but was in the religious gatherings of his brethren whenever he could be absent from his public duties. He served several terms as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention. He was a good worker and liberal contributor in his home church. His manners were genial and all that characterize a Christian gentleman.

Five churches were added this year, all in Coosa county, Concord, Fellowship, Poplar Springs, Flint Hill or Salem, and Shiloh. Concord was seven miles south of

Hatchett, McElroy, Pylant, Smoot, Austin, Lull, and Bates, Sedberry and Lacy were quite efficient members of it. Some sisters of this church are worthy of special mention for their good works, especially Sisters Williams, Stout, Thomas, Haggerty, Storrs, Bates, and Adams.

Good Hope was eight miles west of Tallassee, and a good church. Three of her deacons were for years prominent in the body, Charles Gregory, Norton, and Timmerman. There were three ministers here also members, V. D. Harrington, Joseph Norton, and Benjamin Timmerman. Harmony was among the eastern hills of Coosa, but the lands being fertile drew good substantial men, and the church has been an influential one. One of the three men, now living who was at the formation of the association, is still a member here, and has been for these years. Though a plain man, yet quite successful in the ministry, having baptized many converts, and has had several pastorate lasting over twenty years each. This is J. H. Colley, who, though looking well still, is now feeble. He has been moderator of the association.

Goldville is in the gold bearing region of northern Tallapoosa. It has had some good strong men, especially when the mines were being worked. One, W. H. Womble, was a man of superior parts, and introduced the first temperance resolutions into the association. He was licensed to preach later. Two of his sons are useful Baptists in Texas, and one of his daughters is the wife of J. M. Carroll, the beloved corresponding secretary of Texas until recently.

The new ministers added were J. D. Williams, A. Van Hoose, and P. H. Lundy, all of Wetumpka. Asa M. Hutner, Jas. Jeter, and Robert Stewart were licentiates, A. Van Hoose was a strong man and well educated. He remained only a few years in Alabama and then returned to Georgia. He still lives in the Empire State, (1895) and has charge of a prosperous school at Gainesville, though now advanced in age. P. H. Lundy was for some years pastor in Wetumpka, and would probably have remained longer but for a sad family trouble. He continued to preach in the central part of the State until his death some twenty years since. He was a good preacher, well educated, and of unquestioned piety.

An additional district was formed this year, and correspondence maintained with the same bodies with which it had been opened before.

The spirit of the body in its outlook over the field of Christian effort is indicated by a series of resolutions, the most important of which embraced,

1. Approval of the Southern Baptist Convention and its work.
2. To forward the funds on hand to the Alabama Baptist State Convention, to be applied to missing work within the associational bounds.
3. Asking the churches to report to next session whether or not they were willing for the body to become a constituent member of the State Convention.
4. Recommending the members of the churches to take for information on mission subjects "The Southern Baptist Missionary Journal, published by the Domestic Mission and Foreign Mission Boards of the Convention," at Richmond, Va.
5. A hearty endorsement of a Southern Baptist Publication Society, and a recommendation to the churches to make their pastors life members of it.
6. Recommended a ministers, and deacons' meeting to be held in Wetumpka on the 2nd Sunday in April, 1848.
7. That the best way for parents to carry out the injunction "to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," is to bring them together in Sabbath schools for the study of the Holy Scriptures.
8. Recommending every church to meet every Sunday for religious worship.

stantly brought under tribute by his brethren and no one rendered any service in his power more readily than Bro. Jeter, either for his brethren or master. It was seldom he was absent from the meetings of church, or association, and was also found at the larger gatherings of the brethren. He was in the first meeting and continued with the body until death released him in 1861.

Correspondence was commenced this year with the Tuskegee Association, and the association also, by vote, became a member of the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

There was an increased interest reported his year in Domestic Mission, by the committee on the state of Religions, and their contributions for the same had been made by most of the churches. They also expressed gratitude to the State Convention for sending Elder Jas. M. Russell to labor in the bounds of the body; as also gratitude for the success that had attended his labors. The Convention was asked to continue him among them. They also said that "while rejoicing in the interest taken in missions among the whites, we feel deeply the importance of devising some better means for the religious instruction of our colored population, and recommend employing a preacher to devote his whole time to their instruction; visiting them with the permission of their masters, at their masters' houses; and where there were not meeting houses convenient, they were advised to provide them for the colored people. A committee of five slave holders was appointed to take the matter in charge and secure a pastor.

Poplar Springs, Flint Hill or Salem, Elkahatchie, Union, Harmony, Good Hope, and Bethlehem had been graciously revived; while Concord, Fellowship, Shiloh, New Salem, Friendship, Hylabee, Liberty, and Wetumpka complained of coldness and barrenness. Some of the sister associations, especially the Alabama, were congratulated upon the success of their missions.

It was determined that the union meetings should decide where the associations should be held; and that they rotate, beginning with the first district, and embrace the 1st Sunday in October.

W. H. Womble offered a resolution that was adopted condemning making, selling, or using ardent spirits as a beverage. Elder Abscy F. Hunter died this year, and the body said his patience and piety would long be remembered, as also his meekness. Hospitalized 140; letter 157; restored 2; dismissed 63; excluded 4; died 6; total 288. Contributions \$111.20.

1849.

The fifth session was held with Union church, Oct. 6th, to 8th, 1849. Sermon by J. Hankston, Jude 3. Owing to the death of Elder Wilson during the year, Elder David Culbertson was appointed moderator pro tem.

Elder Wilson was a native of Georgia. His efforts largely stayed the tide of anti-missionism in the split, and mainly guided the movements of the Missionary Baptists within these bounds in the early formative period. He was the first mover for the organization of an association—was its first moderator and remained continuously so until relieved by death, April 15th, 1849, at his home in Coosa county. The notice of his death in the minutes uses this expression, "His labors among the churches were greatly blessed of God to the conversion of many souls; and his praise is in all the churches."

The election for moderator resulted in the choice of Elder Joseph Hankston. J. W. Suttle was elected clerk. Four churches, all located in Coosa county, joined at this session, Mt. Zion, Bethel, Antioch, and Weogufka. Mt. Zion was about ten miles

Rockford. It was a good church, and has had many good members, among them Hiram Bentley, Stephen Jackson, Jones Stephens, A. B. Garey, Frank Simms, Simcon and John Penton, Col. Austin, — Kincaid, G. W. Walker, J. C. Maxwell, Jas. Sandlin, Jack Gilliland, and others.

The location and history of Fellowship is not remembered. Poplar Springs was a new church six miles north of Rockford. It afterwards had the largest membership of any church in the association. For a good while it ranked among the best churches of the body, but an unfortunate affair broke its peace 1878, causing a division from which it never recovered. Among its influential members may be named Elders J. M. Butler and J. R. Steeley, and Laymen J. A. Pylant, John Chancellor, Joseph Murphy and his sons William and Mark, John A. Logan, A. Logan, Guy Smith, Danl. Thompson, Jas. Logan, and John Smith.

Flint Hill, afterward Salem, was six miles west of Rockford. It was never a strong church. Shiloh has already been noticed. Several of these churches came from the Mulberry. The new ministers added this year were Elders Joseph Hankston, G. W. Scoggins, J. R. Steeley, J. M. Butler, J. M. Buiser and J. W. Jeter, ordained this year. Four require special notice for their faithful work. Elder Joseph Hankston was a native Georgian, and entered the ministry in early life, and soon rose to local prominence. He had been moderator of the Western Association of Georgia, and a preacher there until he reached the strength of his manhood. He came to Alabama soon after the removal of the Indians. He was for some years moderator of the Mulberry Association. When Shiloh united with the Central Association, he being a member and pastor of the church, it made him a member of the body. It was not long before he was made moderator, which place he held 14 years. He was a strong preacher, a good presiding officer, and was pastor of some of the best churches until about 80 years of age. He died at about 84, full of years and honors from his brethren. He sleeps in a much neglected cemetery on the banks of the Tallapoosa river. Near him sleeps another loved brother, in the same cemetery, Elder T. J. Russell, who also presided over the Central for six years.

Jas. M. Butler was deficient in education, and was not characterized by strength as an expounder of scripture, but his power in exhortation was remarkable but few ever having been his equal in Alabama. This wonderful gift, combined with strong personal magnetism, and a fine capacity to work his members in spheres for which they were adapted; and sustained by unquestioned piety, made him a successful pastor. He was quite a revivalist, and during the time of his ministry baptized more persons than any other pastor of the time in his section. He has been known to drop into a meeting in a cultured community, where a meeting of days had been going on under the lead of some of our ablest ministers without much visible result, and under his first sermon, if it could so be called, a movement of wonderful power spring up. But owing to his modest opinions of his own efforts it would take much insistence to get him into the pulpit under such circumstances. He died before he reached the prime of life.

J. R. Steeley was also a man of not much note as an expositor, but also possessed of fine gifts as an exhorter and in prayer. He also was permitted by God's blessings to bury in baptism with Jesus a very large number of believers. He still lives, though upward of 80 years of age. He is poor, and not able to preach often now, but his brethren take pleasure in ministering to his wants.

J. W. Jeter, did not occupy much of his time as pastor, nor did he do a great deal of preaching. But he was a man of means, and his fine business sense was con-

east of Wetumpka, in a pretty level belt of pine land. It did not long survive the war. There were two ordained ministers in this church, Joel Nickols and Robert Stewart. They were men of fair preaching capacity, of good property, and who stood well with the brethren. They did not serve churches as pastors much of the time, but were wise counselors among their brethren. Elder Nickols was advanced in life when he came into the association. He was baptized at old Elam church, near Montgomery, in 1824.

But little is known of Bethel, Antioch was about twelve miles north of Wetumpka, and was a good church. For a long while it had Bright Skipper for its pastor. Its leading members were David Lawson, Joseph and Robert Rogers, Elijah Holtzclaw, — Collier, and — Hollield.

Wetumpka was twelve miles northwest of Rockford, on the large creek of the same name. It came from the Mulberry to the Central. It was here that Dr. Basil Manly, Sr., visited the association while acting as general missionary for the State. For a while it was a strong church, and numbered among its members, Wm. M. Lindsey, Wm. Wilson, David Griffin, Wm. Thompson, Sim Hughes, and three men who were the fathers of 61 children, viz.: Evan Callee 16, Benj. Callaway 21, and Robert Taylor 24. There were only four mothers for all these children.

Elders Williams, Colley, and Culberson did the preaching on Sunday, and the notes say "that believers rejoiced, and sinners mourned and asked the prayers of God's people." This Bro. Culberson was the father of Hon. David Culberson so long and at present a distinguished member of congress from Texas, and grandfather to Chas. Culberson, the governor of Texas. Elder Joel Nickols was a new addition to ministry, and Robert Stewart had been ordained. They were both members of Mt. Zion. The licentiates were I. Holmes, E. T. Akin, W. Adkinson, T. H. Wilson, and E. P. Spivey.

Elder Joseph Hankston had been under the joint employment of the association and Domestic Board as missionary for the year, and his labors had been much blessed. It was decided by the body that the best way to provide for the religious interest of the slaves, was to assign them a part of the house used by the whites, at the same service with them, and to furnish them with decent clothing to wear to church; and thus both enjoy the same opportunities. Favorable notice was made of the Alabama Baptist Advocate, a weekly paper published by A. W. Chambliss, Sr.

It was resolved that the best way to do mission work in their own destitution, was to purchase a home and farm, and locate a missionary in the largest destitution, so that the missionary might become a resident among the people, and identified in interest with those among whom he labored; and also be more with his family. A sufficient fund was raised to purchase one such home, and E. T. Akin was located upon it in the northwestern part of the territory. Subsequently another home was purchased in the northern part, and the body then gave the home to his widow.

only a short while, and the body then gave the home to his widow.

The Southern Baptist Publication Society was highly commended; and the association the following year raised \$50.00 to make Elder Joseph Hankston a life director of it.

Baptisms 238; letters 170; restored 6; dismissed 198; excluded 20; total 1032. Contributions \$260.44.

I. W. Suttle who was elected clerk this year, was the peer of any member of the body for usefulness to it. He came into it with Shiloh church, and continued with it until his death in 1884. He was among its wisest counselors and most liberal contributors.

For twelve or more years he presided over it. He was a man of native intellect and integrity of character. Born in 1808, he came with his father to Alabama in 1818. Without education, except that self acquired after becoming a man, he was honored about 1849 as county judge, and in 1850 as probate judge when the office was established. His family have held official position in the county and association for nearly 40 years. At times every office in the association was filled by them at once.

1850.

The sixth meeting was held with Good Hope church from Oct. 5 to 7th, 1850. The sermon was preached by Elder Joel Nickols from Isa. 21:11. Three churches, Bethesda, Shady Grove, and Rockford were added at this session. They were all new churches in Coosa county. Bethesda is one mile northwest from Brooksville. While it has never been a strong church, it has been useful, and has pulled steadily and quietly along. This church owes its origin and upbuilding to J. H. Colley and Bright Skipper. Its leading members were J. R. Cross, J. H. Wilbanks, Ben Hodnett, W. G. Ellis, J. H. Cleveland, J. A. Suttle, Jas. Walston, R. J. Simmons, John Comer, D. M. Harris, and D. S. Martin. Shady Grove is six miles south of Rockford, and was built up principally under the labors of J. R. Steeley. It was never a strong church, but had some members who were faithful in their efforts to keep the church always in line with associational work. Its prominent members have been I. Chadwick, C. J. Crew, W. Murchison, G. W. Bearden, W. Hand, Wade Hussey, S. R. Ballard, G. B. Allen, Wm. Allen, F. M. Allen, T. A. Kelley, and J. J. Grant.

Rockford was constituted this year, at the county seat, which had before this been destitute of Baptist preaching. I. W. Suttle having become judge of probate, got the few Baptists scattered around to come together and hold a meeting. J. M. Butler and J. Hankston preached. The meeting was a gracious one, and a church was constituted, the new converts baptized, and from then on, though never large in numbers, or strong financially, the church has exerted as much influence as any one in the body. Nearly all the while it has furnished some of the officers, and sometimes all of them. A house of worship was built soon after the constitution, Suttle furnishing most of it. At this first meeting, J. S. Bentley and his wife were baptized, and for many years after the removal of Judge Suttle, they were as parents to the church. From this church has gone out men and women whose power for good has been largely felt in this and other States. The Womble of Texas, Bentley, Brewer, and Shaffer all own this as their mother church. Some of its prominent members, besides those named, have been and are William Chancellor, Daul. McDaniel, the Tekels, J. L. Gilder, N. P. Mackey, J. A. Suttle, T. J. Pennington, J. F. Edwards, J. A. Welch, J. L. Watts, N. Hines, S. M. Suttle, T. S. McDonald, A. D. Bentley, W. T. Stewman, Thos. Johnson, H. Norrell, D. L. McAlister, L. Johnson, J. C. Maxwell, Matt Lawson, and others.

The new minister was Bright Skipper. He was a wonderful man. Without early advantages, or any in fact, with some strong besetments, barely able to read by spelling out his words when he commenced preaching; by dint of application; reading at every opportunity from best writers at command; by native intellect, good reasoning powers, and personal magnetism, and God's grace, he became one of the best preachers in this part of the State. He never overcame the early deficiency of education so but that it was manifest in pronunciation and grammar. His vocabulary was good under the circumstances. His thought, the clearness of his reasoning, his earnestness, and the unction accompanying his utterances made one forget his defects, as

he bore the listener along irresistibly to his conclusions. This was not occasional, but the rule. Cultivated men and women enjoyed his sermons as well as the common people. His pastorates were among the best churches. Besides Skipper, D. R. W. McIver and T. H. Wilson, were added to the list. McIver was a finished, cultured gentleman, an able preacher, and good writer. He was pastor of the church at Wetumpka. The few years he was in the body, he took a leading part in all its work, and a deep interest in its prosperity. The facts of his general history are unknown to the writer. Wilson preached but a year or two when he was taken away by death. He was a man of lovely disposition, gentle but firm, noted for piety, and much was hoped of him.

Blankston and I. W. Suttle were re-elected moderator and clerk.

The correspondents were W. H. Womble, from Coosa River; Frank Callaway and Wm. Harrington, from Liberty; Beni Mott, S. H. Toney, Drury Harrington, and W. W. Mason, from Tuskegee; Hand from McBerry; G. W. Davis, representing Indian Mission; and Platt Stout, of the Southern Baptist Publishing Society.

Sunday's services were conducted by Stout, Blankston, and Callaway. Collection \$38.35. Christians were rejoicing, and sinners crying out for mercy.

Correspondents were returned to Alabama, Liberty, Coosa River, Tuskegee, and Mulberry Associations. D. R. W. McIver, W. W. Waller, and J. D. Williams, were appointed delegates to the State Convention. By request, a delegation consisting of J. Blankston, J. D. Williams, Joel Nickols, E. T. Akin, Robt. Stewart, Bright Skipper, and J. M. Butler, was appointed to assist in the formation of a new association, at Ilethesda church, Autauga county, Saturday before 4th Sunday in October. This meeting gave birth to the Unity.

W. C. Barnes was made treasurer, and held the place until 1860.

The committee on the State of Religion reported the spiritual condition of most of the churches good. The churches generally are supplied with pastors. Large numbers had been added to the churches.

A Minister's and Deacon's meeting was appointed for Friday before 5th Sunday in June, 1851, at Shiloh, for the purpose of trying to bring about more uniformity in faith, discipline, and contributions. And W. T. Hatchett moved that ministers and deacons be requested to urge more liberal and systematic contributions to the benevolent objects of the Baptists; and that the ministers preach to their churches on the subject.

The contributions amounted to \$406.75, which finished paying for the home of the missionary in the northwestern part; and gave \$130.00 toward the new purchase in northeastern part, after paying up other appropriations. \$186 additional was pledged for the purchase of the other home; and \$15.25 paid to Bro. Stout for Southern Baptist Publication Society, making over \$600.00 for the year. It is difficult in this early period to tell just what was done as the work was not systematized as is now the case in most working associations.

Baptized 134; letter 167; restored 2; dismissed 120; excluded 36; dead 6; total 1326.

CHAPTER III.

Working Period, brightness, energy, and utility now dominate for awhile.

The formative period has now passed, and the association enters upon a career of usefulness and enterprise that made her share the respect of the leaders of the

Baptist hosts. From now on instead of struggling to get a footing that she might stand, she proposed to lift high the royal banner, and press on to conquest.

1851.

The seventh session was held with Poplar Springs church, Oct. 4th, 1851. Sermon by B. Skipper, from Ps. 133. New churches were Paint Creek, and Providence, Coosa county, and Providence, Tallapoosa county. The new ministers were, H. L. Harlan, and Joseph Hill.

Point Creek in the northwest of Coosa, was for some years a fair but rather weak church, situated near the creek of the same name. It never became prominent. The most prominent of its members were R. D. Harrison, S. Baxley, D. Waldrop, and J. P. Martin. It dissolved about 1857.

Providence, Coosa, was a pretty good church located near the Coosa River, some 12 or 15 miles southwest of Rockford. It is still in existence, but through unfortunate influences that have affected it and other churches, its usefulness has been handicapped. Among its most prominent members have been W. J. Long, Henry Norrell, Isaiah and Thomas Holmes, Wm. Conaway, T. J. Hull, M. J. Esus, J. P. Ingram, A. I. Clark, D. J. Hull, A. G. Rains, D. A. Harden.

Providence, Tallapoosa, has been a good church in all its history. It is situated in a good farming region in the northwest of Tallapoosa, and near the large Hillabee creek. It has been in and out of the Central and Cary Associations several times, but is welcomed in either. There have been some most excellent men connected with it, among whom may be named the Harlans, three brothers, the two Congers, G. W. Burke and son, I. B. Brown, and J. R. Gilbert. H. L. Harlan was a good average preacher of the day. He had a good home and living. Was mild and gentle in his manner; warm in his attachments; and lived above reproach. His family were interesting. The deaf mutes were early converted to Christ as were also the other children. The two youngest boys obtained a hope in Christ the same evening at home, and on Saturday of that week joined the church. The father and mother's hearts were filled with gladness. The church rejoiced with him, for they loved him dearly who had so long served them as pastor. It is told that at an earlier date a trouble got into the church which grew worse and worse. Jas. Russell, who was then pastor, seeing but little hope of settlement, after a long conference one Saturday, proposed a dissolution of the church, and all to grant letters to each one. The proposition was acted upon and agreed to. When that was done, he then asked all who were willing to drop whatever was in the past, and come together and reconstitute, and live together in fellowship hereafter, to meet him at the church house the next day, and they would reorganize. The most of them came together on Sunday, reconstituted, and have since prospered.

Joseph Hill has already been introduced to the reader. I. Blankston was re-elected moderator, and W. M. Landsey clerk. The missionary sermon was preached by Joel Nickols. Jeff Falkner preached in afternoon. Collection \$30. This was the first visit of Jefferson Falkner and Samuel Henderson to the Association.

The Missionary board reported that Bro. E. T. Akin was settled in the purchased home in the northwestern field; that he had constituted two new promising churches, Paint Creek and Providence; and that his work was moving on successfully. That an 80-acre farm had been purchased for \$300, in the northeastern part, and that T. H. Wilson had just moved to it. Thus the two fields were manned by two young ministers who had been raised up in the body.

Bro. Henderson brought before the body the enterprise of the Tuskegee Association in the establishment of the East Alabama Female College at Tuskegee. The association, by recommendation from a committee of which Patrick McKinney was chairman, agreed to co-operate with the Tuskegee in making the school a success.

J. M. Butler from committee on State of Religion, reported all the churches had been supplied with preaching; and that the churches had been more blessed than ever before. That under the labor of the missionaries the desert places had been made to blossom as the rose.

The Ministers' and Deacons' meeting held by appointment of last session recommended the "Baptist Psalmody" as the hymn book to be used; and also the "Pious Instructor," by Snell, as a safe guide in discipline.

Upon a query sent up, it was decided that an excluded minister could be restored to membership without being restored to ministerial functions. It was also recommended that if a church had no suitable members for deacons, that she should wait until she had such before filling the office.

It was decided to take steps for founding a Literary Institution with view to better preparing ministers for their life work. This was the germ from which sprang the Central Institute. J. Bankston, W. C. Barnes, W. T. Hatchett, L. Marberry, D. R. W. McIver, I. W. Suttle, J. A. Pylant, J. D. Williams, J. W. Jeter, A. H. Kendrick, R. Smoot, S. J. Thomas, and Rigdon Edwards, were appointed an Executive Board for the association, and especially to take charge of the contemplated school interest. They were clothed with power to do whatever ought to be done for founding it, and securing a charter.

Jeter, McIver, Nichols, Williams, Bankston, Lethner, Pylant, W. T. and A. Hatchett, T. Leverett, and V. D. Harrington were appointed delegates to the State Convention.

W. C. Barnes, I. W. Suttle, Jeter, Lindsey, R. Edwards, Pylant, P. McKinney, Cross, Jesse Russell, and H. H. Williams, each gave \$5.00, making \$50.00, for the purpose of making Joseph Bankston a life director of the State Baptist Publication Society.

The contributions for this session were \$502.20. But the amount for foreign missions was as yet quite small, nor did the association, or Baptists generally, awake to their obligations to the heathen for years yet ahead. The most that was done in this direction was by a few, who gave pretty largely, or the Foreign Mission Board, would have been without means to push their work. The association had not as yet realized its duty fully. This had been largely owing to pastors failing to properly instruct the churches.

Baptized 247; letters 185; restored 8; dismissed 116; excluded 49; died 9; total 1472.

1852.

The eighth session was held with Elkahatchie church, October 2nd, 1852. Sermon by Bankston, from Gal. 6:9.

Bankston and Lindsey were re-elected. New churches were Tallassee, Tallapoosa county, and Mt. Olive, and Mt. Zion, Coosa county. New ministers T. H. Wilson, and A. W. Bullard.

Tallassee church is located at Tallassee, the important and pretty manufacturing town on the Tallapoosa River. Its membership has been principally operatives in the factory. It rose to its greatest degree of prosperity from 1871 to 1875, when the

Manufacturing Company supplemented the salary, the church could pay with \$400.00 and a pastor's home, during which time G. E. Brewer preached for them every Sunday. Over 200 were baptized, and the church developed every way. It has continued a pretty strong church since. But that company failing, the appended advantages failed, and it has not since had a pastor for all its time, and therefore is not what it would have been with one. The church has sometimes been with the Central, the Tuskegee, and the Tallapoosa River associations. Its leading members, were the Bartons, Timmerman, Bowles, Strong, Taylors, Frank Barnes, Wm. Harmon, Pruett, O'Hara, Wallace, Benson, Lilly, McEhancy, and Holmes.

Mt. Zion was a few miles from where Eclectic now stands. It did not continue in existence many years but what time it lived under the fostering care of Elders Joel Nickols, and Robert Stewart, and Seaborn Jackson, Wm. Rives, the Gregorays, and others, it was of prominence and usefulness. Mt. Olive has been a good church from the first, and has had many useful members, among those remembered may be named W. C. Brown, Adkin, Corley, and sons, J. W. Fulmer and sons, the Fords, Thompsons, Works, Pruett, Newmans, Hills, and others.

T. H. Wilson has been noticed elsewhere. A. W. Bullard was in the association but a short while. He flashed up like a meteor, but soon burned out, a cinder. For a little while he figured in the upper part of Tallapoosa and Coosa; and swept over country with revivals and large accessions by baptism. Several new churches sprang up under his work that have been good ones, such as Tallapoosa River church, Eagle Creek and others. But his moral make up was wrong. He was excluded for awhile; then restored. He afterward went westward to Arkansas and Texas. He was charged with different evil works, and the last report from him was that he was hanged by an incensed mob in Texas.

The missionary sermon was preached by McIver, and, like his sermons usually, it was good. Collection \$25.50. In the afternoon A. W. Chambliss preached a fine sermon; followed at night by Hugh Carmichael in another.

Correspondence was kept up with the Liberty, Tuskegee, Alabama, Autauga, Mulberry, and Coosa River.

The Missionary Board reported that E. T. Akin was still laboring successfully in the Northwestern field, and T. H. Wilson in the Northeastern. That V. D. Harrington had been employed for nine months as a Colporteur. Owing to delay in getting books he had not sold as many as desired or expected. He had sold 227 volumes, 120 of which were Bibles and Testaments. He had given away 40 Bibles, 10 Testaments, and 78 other volumes to the destitute. The colporteur stated that in his opinion there were 250 families in the bounds of the association without any part of God's word. The Board recommended the continuance of the colportage work.

The Foreign Mission report showed that as yet but little had been accomplished in the foreign field. But that in the spring of the year, March 30th, Cabiness, Wilson, Crawford, and Dr. Burton had sailed for China. The report was an able one, made by J. M. Russell, and he followed it with an earnest appeal for larger contributions, more prayer, and a stronger seconding of the providences of God in favor of foreign missions. The work as then carried on, looks indeed small to us of the present day, and we can but exclaim "What hath God wrought!"

The report on Indian Missions, made by McIver, shows that the work was just beginning among the red men, and that they were as yet but little removed from the primal savage state. The claims they had upon us who now occupied their lands was pressed. Great changes have taken place since then. Many of them are now civil-

ized and cultured, have schools, homes, farms, churches, and the appliances of civilization. More than 13,000 are enrolled in Baptist churches, with Baptist associations, and are sending out missionaries, and contributing to sending the gospel abroad. The government is taking steps looking to them becoming a state in this great sisterhood of states.

J. D. Williams made a good report on the Bible Cause. He asked the association to co-operate with the State Convention and the S Baptist Convention, by raising them and there a fund for the work; and that it be a cause for which they should annually contribute.

Bright Skipper reported upon Domestic Mission work, and felt cheered by the success attending it. Wetumpka church sent up a request for a mission work to be inaugurated in behalf of the negroes.

Akins on the State of Religion reported good revivals, and a good condition prevailing in most of the churches. Pylant from Committee on Temperance urged a stricter discipline for using intoxicants. The committees all complained of want of time for making proper reports, having been appointed only since the meeting opened.

There was quite an able and lengthy report from the Board of Education, discussing different phases of the subject. They announced having secured a flexible charter for their contemplated school, so that it might be either academic or collegiate as circumstances justified. It was then contemplated being a combination school for literature proper, and mechanic arts combined, and to make the expenses low enough to benefit a large number in moderate circumstances. The report also recommended the establishment of a system of free public schools for the State, instead of appropriations for the poor, for such appropriations humiliated the recipients. (The State then had no public school system.) Upon this subject Melver, Williams, and Barnes were appointed to visit and enlist the State Legislature to action.

An Executive Board was appointed, who were also placed in special charge of the school interest. It consisted of J. Hankston, J. D. Williams, R. Edwards, I. W. Suttle, W. T. Hatchett, S. J. Thomas, Melver, Pylant, Barnes, Kendrick, Lindsey, Marberry, and P. McKinney.

The Missionary Board was composed of Lindsey, Pylant, Griffin, Guy Smith, and Caffee.

To show the advancement from then till now on the line of Scripture translation, the following is called from this minute: J. D. Williams offered a resolution, and it was supported in a strong speech by W. A. Chambliss, "denouncing the effort being made to secure a revision of the Bible, as a dangerous heresy in disguise." The resolution passed without a voice against it. And yet the revision then contemplated has been made, and others still. The new versions are printed in parallel columns with the old; and are in our homes; on our pulpits; and we are glad to have them. So things change. What stirs anger at one period, becomes a pleasure to the same people later.

The association asked the Convention to send some good efficient man among the churches to stir them up to Baptist principles, and every good work, and asked the churches to pay the salary. Baptisms 305; letters 219; restored 8; dismissed 213; excluded 45; died 15; total 1839. Contributions \$531.10.

1853.

The ninth session was held with Harmony church, Oct. 1st, 1853. Sermon by J.

M. Butler from Gal. 6:10. Hankston and Lindsey were re-elected. Union Springs, bearing a letter from the Mulberry joined at this time. This year Elder J. M. Russell became a member of the body, having his membership at Union. B. D. Harrison became a minister of the body by the reception of Union Springs church. This church is in the northwestern part of Coosa, in a fine valley country. Being remote, until recently, from public highways, it has not been so well known. The people live bountifully on home products, and have never felt the financial pressure which has borne down at other places. The membership have been usually of a solid type, and with the exception of a flurry for a year or two with Shermanism, things have kept on in the even tenor of their way. Had their pastors trained them properly they would have been a liberal church, for they have had the ability; and being Christians they would have had the will with proper instruction. The leading members have been the Hixleys, Coopers, Looneys, Woods, Hasties, J. R. Morris, Taylor, Buchanan, and J. R. Steeley.

Elder Harrison was a plain preacher, and did not live long in the association. Elder J. M. Russell though now for the first time a member, had been in all the sessions except the first. Was a pastor or missionary in the body from 1846, and took as active an interest in the work as any member. From now on he was fully identified. He perhaps shared the course of the association more than any one man. He was fully alive to all denominational work; and a very earnest, decided Baptist, believing their church organization and doctrine that of the New Testament, he was ready to die if need be in maintaining. He was educated, and untrammelled by secular affairs, for his father was well able to do so, and gladly took care of his family while his son worked for the Master. He kept up with denominational work by reading its periodicals. He was a strong Calvinist in doctrine, but a warm hearted sympathetic and effective revivalist also. He was a pastor among us until his removal to Texas in 1866. He revisited the association in 1886. But time had told on the stalwart man, and the intervening twenty years had sapped much of the strength from body and mind. He returned to Texas, and lived only two or three years. Among the visitors were D. G. Daniel of the Southern Baptist Publication Society, Albert Williams of the S. W. Baptist, Timothy Russell from the Liberty, and Jesse A. Collins from the Coosa River, and B. Mott from Tuskegee.

Preaching on Sunday by B. Mott in the morning; J. M. Russell missionary sermon; Collection \$33.55; and D. G. Daniel in afternoon. In the collection for missions, after the sermon, a gold pencil had been cast in by a young sister who wished to give, but had no money with her. The next day in the meeting the fact was mentioned, when some one proposed a voluntary offering on the part of brethren to redeem and return it to her. Soon \$27.15 was laid upon the table, and the pencil returned to the owner. This made the collection \$50.70.

Owing to difficulty in procuring supplies of books from the Southern Baptist Publication Society in time to facilitate the work of colportage in the association, Russell proposed, and the suggestion was adopted, to establish a book Depository under the control of three brethren, to be annually elected, who should have power to locate and manage the business of the Depository, and also employ and direct the colporteur of the body. A report was to be made annually by said Depository to the body. They were not to add more than 15 per cent. to the catalogue price of books. All the books due from the Publication Society were to be turned into the Depository. A fund was to be raised sufficient to make the work effective. Churches were to raise funds annually for said work.

The committee on State of Religion reported gracious revivals among some of the churches, but coldness among others.

The trustees of the Mechanical and Literary Institute reported that the school had been located on the Plank road, a little below Union Church. \$6000 had been subscribed, a sum deemed sufficient to justify action. They had therefore contracted for the brick for a building three stories high, 80 feet long, 40 feet wide. The estimated cost of the building was \$10,000. They acknowledged valuable work done by W. C. Barnes in aid, and for which he asked no compensation. They then turned the matter over to the body to elect trustees for its management. The trustees were to be elected by a popular vote of the body. J. A. Pylant was chosen as general agent for the Institute.

It was agreed that all undesignated money for missions be divided equally between African, Indian, and Domestic Missions.

\$15.00 was raised and given to a deaf, indigent minister present.

The trustees elected were P. McKinney, W. C. Barnes, R. Snoot, J. W. Jeter, J. D. Letcher, D. R. W. McIver, W. T. Hatchett, J. A. Pylant, W. M. Lindsey, R. Edwards, A. H. Kendrick, F. F. Wood, and J. Bankston.

The Depository board elected were I. W. Stickle, J. M. Russell, and W. G. McWilliams.

Nothing was done in colportage work because the Publication Society would not send out books not paid for, and the board of the association had no cash on hand to advance. T. H. Wilson of the Northwestern Mission had died early in the year, so nothing was done in that part of the field. That in the northwestern was progressing finely. The Foreign Mission report showed but little done as yet. It declared opposition to the work yet existing among them. But the report presented strong reasons for its support.

The Domestic Mission report was rather an argument for, than a report of what had been done. It concluded with a recommendation for a three days and nights protracted meeting to be held with the slaves in each church and community; the owners or deputation of them to attend, to watch over and regulate the service. The report and recommendation was made by J. M. Russell.

The report on Indian Missions by J. R. Steeley, was a beautiful and touching appeal for the red men. It recalled how that our homes, towns, school houses, churches, &c. were built from the timbers of the Indians' forests. Our homes and fields were upon the lands once his, obtained largely from them by fraud, and paid for in many cases by the white man's alcohol. Now that they were receiving the gospel, and some of their just bitterness dying out, an appeal was made to do what we could by way of reparation, in giving them the bread of life, and showing them the way to happier hunting grounds than they now knew of.

A good report on Bible Cause was made by J. D. Williams, emphasizing its incalculable value—rejoicing in the rapid translation of the Bible into the languages of the heathen world—and showing the great good of Bible societies. They commended the establishment of the Alabama Bible Society, in co-operation with the general one of the South, at Nashville—the creation of subordinate ones by different associations, and especially the one of this association, and urged the churches to its support.

The committee on Temperance reported some progress. That, while some churches would take no positive stand—some disregarded—yet others had firmly prohibited mingling with the world in drinking and treating. The report was by H. Skipper.

The report on Sabbath schools, by J. M. Butler, declared some progress, but stated that but few were in existence. The only churches reporting schools were Union, Wetumpka, Poplar Spring, Mt. Olive, and Antioch.

\$71.10 was raised for the Bible Society, and it was organized by making J. Bankston, president; J. D. Williams, vice-president; W. M. Lindsey, secretary; and W. C. Barnes, treasurer. Its meetings were to be held in connection with the association. Baptized 162; letter 232; restored 9; dismissed 148; excluded 69; dead 16; total 2029. Contributions \$312.89, and \$71.10 for Bible cause.

1854.

The tenth session was held with Wetumpka church, Sept. 30th, 1854. The sermon was preached by J. D. Williams, from Eph. 6:11-13. Bankston and Lindsey were re-elected. New Hope church, near Goldville, Tallapoosa, joined. The church was rather a weak one. It went into the organization of the Carey in a few years. H. J. Hickey was added to the ministry. He was not long a member, so made no very deep impress on the body, though he was a good man. Those who preached at different points Saturday night and Sunday, were J. M. Russell, Oliver Welch, Hugh Carmichael, E. T. Akin, J. M. Butler, and A. T. M. Handy. Collection \$41.08. On Monday Bro. Ashcraft preached at the church.

Tallapoosa church was granted a letter to join the Tuskegee.

The Missionary board reported that Bro. Akin had faithfully and successfully carried on his work, baptizing 16, and receiving by letter 18. They also stated that the time for which he had been employed was filled out, and the field no longer needed him as missionary, for the churches that had been planted were now self-sustaining. They recommended the discontinuance of the board.

The board of Trustees reported the Institute as now beyond a doubt, ready to take rank among others as the equal of any high school of our section. The corner stone was laid on the 7th of September with imposing ceremonies, in the presence of a vast audience. A masterly address was delivered on the occasion by Chancellor Mason. This was followed by a short but highly appropriate one from Saml. Henderson. The building was to be completed and ready for use by the 1st of May, 1855. Application had been made for admission of pupils from different parts of our own State, and from Mississippi. People from the river counties had signified their intention of moving to the school, both for its benefits, and for the health of families. They were hopeful of soon raising enough money to liquidate all debts.

Two trustees, Hendrick and Hatchett, had resigned, and the board had filled the vacancy by appointing A. B. Callaway and D. W. Hozeeman. The association was asked to confirm the appointment. A collection of \$112.00 was raised for the school.

I. W. Stickle from the Book Depository reported that there was on hand, in books and cash, \$106.50. The business had been small owing to lateness in getting supplies together. There was raised for the work, in addition to the above by the association \$123.45.

J. F. Hooten, from committee on Education, made a good report. He highly recommended Howard College and the Central Institute to the patronage of the brethren for their sons.

J. D. Williams in report on the Bible Cause, urged its circulation as a great Christian duty, and especially the duty of Baptists, since it is their book of faith and discipline, and the way by which we are to succeed.

McIver from the committee on Indian Missions, made strong appeals for it on

the ground of the debt we owed them, and of the success attending our efforts among them. He instanced Mascogee church, planted by Elder Isaac McCoy in 1842, now numbering 400 members; and North York church, constituted by Elder S. Dyer, in 1844, had now more than 300 members. He mentioned Genl. McIntosh as among the native preachers, and Wallace, Buckner, Dennis, and Moffat among the missionaries.

Jeter from Home Missions reported that E. T. Akin had been employed as a missionary at home. The churches had paid to Jesse A. Collins agent for Domestic Mission Board, \$101.45. He recommended the association to employ four of the licentiates to preach for a month each during the leisure season in such fields of the association as might be assigned them.

The report on Foreign Missions by J. M. Butler, was a good one, but showed rather what was being done by Christians generally than what was being done by the denomination.

A good and strong report and appeal on Temperance was made by V. D. Harrington.

The burial of Hon. Seth P. Storrs, was announced to the body, and it adjourned to attend the services. Storrs was a citizen much beloved and honored by his fellow citizens. He was the senator from the district at the time of his death. Though not a member of the church, he was pure in morals, and his influence was good. He was liberal of his means to the Baptist church, for his wife was a devoted member of it. He was nearly related to the distinguished Presbyterian divine, Dr. Storrs, of New York.

Rev. Z. G. Henderson, agent of Howard College, made a good and strong speech in its interest.

The association by resolution and preamble, acknowledged their action on *Bible Revision* as taken at a former session in considerate and erroneous, and declared the brethren perfectly free, without censure, to contribute for the work.

The Southwestern Baptist, Home and Foreign Journal, Indian Advocate, and the Tennessee Baptist were commended to the brethren for patronage.

Williams and McIver were sent to the Southern Baptist Convention. This was the first time delegates had been appointed.

The same Board of Trustees were re-elected, and Pylant was continued as general agent.

The same Depository Board was re-elected, and the Depository continued at Rockford.

It was decided in the future to carry on Domestic work through the Board at Marion.

It was made a rule at this session, that if a member left without permission before adjournment the name was to be erased from the roll.

Baptized 180; letter 227; restored 7; dismissed 240; excluded 61; dead 15; total 2126. Contributions \$524.68.

1855.

The eleventh session was held with Rockford church, Oct. 6th, 1855. Sermon by

Jas. Russell, from Ps. 23:30, and Matt. 24:34.

Hankston and Lindsey were re-elected. New churches Town Creek, ten miles north of Alexander City, and Spring Hill, Coosa county. H. G. Smith, a member of this church, was the new minister added. Among the prominent correspondents were

Hugh Carmichael of the Liberty, Jesse A. Collins, and H. E. Talliaferro, of Coosa River, A. T. M. Handy, Saml. Henderson, and Z. G. Henderson of the Tuskegee, B. B. Smith, J. R. Soter, and J. Parrish of Unity.

J. A. Collins was agent of Domestic Mission Board, and F. M. Law of Alabama Baptist Bible Board.

Those who preached Saturday night and Sunday were Carmichael, Colley, Williams, S. Henderson, B. B. Smith, and J. M. Russell to the blacks.

The report of the Board of Trustees was read and referred to a special committee consisting of I. W. Suttle, G. M. Gamble, W. H. Womble, and Geo. F. Brewer. This was necessary for the work had not yet opened in the school, as had been expected, for the building was not completed for want of funds. No special effort had been made to increase the subscription by the agent, acting under direction of the trustees, because of the stringency of money. The work had made progress, however, by the trustees becoming personally responsible for \$2,700, and the building was now nearly completed. When the special committee reported, they commended the course the trustees had pursued, and the association adopted the report, which also recommended for patronage the East Alabama Female College.

W. C. Barnes from committee on Documents and Requests reported that New Salem, or Goldville, New Hope, and Providence churches of Tallapoosa county, desired letters, wishing to unite with other churches contiguous in forming a new association. This was subsequently done, and the Carey was the result. He also called attention to the discussion going on in the Southwestern Baptist between Revs. Saml. Henderson and E. J. Ham! as to the nature and tendencies of methodism. "The association, by his recommendation and that of the committee, requested its publication in book form, and appointed Barnes, Brewer, and Smoot a committee to solicit subscriptions to the book when published. The Southwestern Baptist, and Home and Foreign Mission Journal were recommended. Bro. Henderson was allowed to present the claims of the paper and take subscriptions.

The superintendent of Book Depository reported that little had been done. Most of the supplies sent out for colportage had remained unpaid for. He advised that the small sum due from J. M. Butler, deceased, be donated to his family. He suggested that it would be better to turn over the assets to the State Depository.

J. M. Russell made the first real report on missions of the Southern Baptist Convention. The preceding ones had been rather essays on Christian duty to missions. This was a report of what was being done, and gave details of the work. He noted that "Indian Missions" had been placed in the hands of the Domestic Mission Board.

The report on Bible and Publication Cause, by Williams, brought no new matter to light, but reiterated and emphasized what had before been said. The report on Ministerial Education by Smoot was a strong one, showing the great need of at least a part of the ministry being well educated, and all to possess as much learning and knowledge as could be obtained. He strongly recommended Howard College and our own opening school. He also recommended the continuance of colportage as being educational in its results, and highly helpful to such as could not attend the schools.

A beautiful report, or paper, was read by Bro. Steeley on Indian Missions; and showed that the work among them was moving on finely. I. W. Suttle from Committee on Sunday Schools, reported that a number of the churches had Sunday schools, and that where they existed the moral tone of the young was improved. He

announced in the report that Rev. J. M. Butler, the appointed chairman of the committee, had died during the year, and had thus ended a beautiful and useful life.

E. T. Atkins reported from the Temperance Committee that some of the churches had taken a high and firm stand on the subject of drinking intoxicants, and their course was exerting a healthful influence around them.

A clear and strong appeal was read before the body, prepared by J. D. Williams, representing the Foreign Board, and Jesse A. Collins, representing the Domestic Mission Board, urging to intenser interest and larger contributions to the missions of the convention. They recommended an effort to be made and pressed until it shall become a regular custom to have District mass meetings for three days, covering Christmas holidays, devoted to prayer, talks, songs, and other religious exercises to awaken interest in missions; and to turn the period from the wretchedly abused perversion of the present, to something more in consonance with the purported object of its celebration. A collection was taken after the reading, amounting to \$40.25 for Indian Missions; and to other missions \$139.80; and \$33.00 to *Pro. Law* for Alabama Baptist Bible Society.

The Board of Trustees were, Joseph Bankston, president; A. B. Callaway, secretary; W. C. Barnes, treasurer; and J. W. Jeter, A. T. Maxwell, P. McKinney, Richard Smoot, J. D. Letcher, D. W. Bozeman, J. A. Fylant, W. M. Lindsey, F. F. Wood, and Owen Swindal.

Depository Board, I. W. Suttle, W. H. Womble, and Geo. E. Brewer. Baptized 168; letter 172; restored 196; excluded 37; died 14; total 2157, but deducting the withdrawing churches left 1955. Contributions \$357.50.

Nether Town Creek or Spring Hill which joined at this session ever became strong. They lived a feeble life for a few years, and then went out. Bro. Smith was a man of strong native mind, and some education and magnetism. His characteristics were rather ruggedness than roundness or smoothness.

1856.

The 12th session was held with Friendship church, on the 4th of October, 1856. Sermon by J. Bankston, from Rom. 12:4, 5. The opening prayer after recess, was by A. T. Holmes, and the letters read by J. W. Bozeman and A. T. Maxwell. No new churches. New ministers J. W. Jeter, Y. D. Harrington, and W. T. Rogers, (ordained this year) and A. T. Holmes, Platt Stout, and B. T. Smith. Licensates D. Harrington, Charles Gregory, and W. H. Womble. Bankston was re-elected moderator, and Geo. E. Brewer clerk.

The association had been a strong body for two or three years, and had now reached the zenith of her power and influence, which it continued to hold until the war's desolating influences brought down its resources and men, and with them much of its power. This session will be more fully reported than others have been, that the make up of the body, the transactions of business, and the personell of it may be better understood by those unfamiliar with the period.

There were present at this session as ministers of the body, Bankston, B. Skipper, J. M. Russell, Jeter, A. T. Holmes, Nickols, Platt Stout, and J. K. Steeley. The visiting ministers were Hugh Carmichael, J. M. Newman, J. J. Bullington, Oliver Welch, Russell Hollman, and H. L. Harlan. Prof. H. H. Bacon of East Alabama Female College was also present.

There was in the association at this time quite a number of strong, intelligent, and influential laymen, who for some years preceding and following helped largely to

make the association the strong body it became. Of these there were present A. H. Kendrick, Rigdon Edwards, Asa Little, A. T. Maxwell, Jas. Walker, Patrick McKinney, Robt. Goodgame, W. H. Thomas, John Coffman, John Benton, Seaborn J. Jackson, Isaac Smith, Jacob Moon, J. W. Bullard, David Conner, J. Smith, L. Thomas, W. C. Barnes, J. D. Letcher, A. B. Callaway, J. W. Bozeman, F. M. Letcher, W. M. Lindsey, Nathan Jeter, J. K. Cross, J. H. Cleveland, J. A. Suttle, Levi Justice, Stephen Jackson, A. B. Garey, Jones Stephens, L. Chadwick, C. J. Crew, G. B. Allen, F. R. Smith, J. Johnson, Jas. L. and Joseph W. Rogers, F. W. Tummerman, J. N. Garrett, M. Joiner, Richard Smoot, Evan Calfee, D. A. Griffin, Sim. Hughes, Benj. Callaway, Abel Lewis, Guy Smith, J. A. Fylant, Geo. Ellis, I. W. Suttle, Geo. E. Brewer, J. L. Gilder, Wm. Conway, Henry Norrell, J. W. Boatright, W. C. Brown, Adkin Corley, E. Lambert, and J. K. Morris. Among those not present now, but equally useful and influential, were E. Conger, G. W. Ilurke, Aaron Harlan, S. J. Thomas, Reuben Maxwell as also Frank and Willis, Lennard Marberry, C. L. Walker, H. Thomas, F. F. Wood, O. Swindal, Wm. Reeves, M. Ray, Stephen Ray, G. W. Willbanks, and J. H. Hiram Bentley, John S. Bentley, W. G. McWilliams, A. G. Due, W. Price, W. H. Womble, Isaac Jones, Wm. Chancellor, John Chancellor, J. D. Murphy, Hardy Jones, Moses Hollingshead, David Lawson, E. Pinson, J. T. P. Christian, Jas. Sandlin, E. J. Wommack, A. J. Terrell, J. H. Norton, J. R. Morris, L. W. Press, A. J. Smith, W. B. J. Stone, Richard Looney, Wm. Adkins, Wm. Allen, G. B. Allen, A. Logan, John A. Logan, Jas. Hart, Wm. Justice, A. W. Colley, H. Meadows, W. T. Hatchett, A. Hatchett, E. Holtzclaw, D. J. Thompson, Wm. Jennings, Jas. Willis, F. M. Allen, and N. Tekell. At a later day another set of young men came and took the places of those.

Carmichael preached at night, A. L. Holmes at 9 A. M., B. Skipper at 11 A. M., Russell Hollman at 3 P. M., and Oliver Welch at night. All the sermons were good, and the missionary sermon by Skipper received encomiums on every hand.

J. W. Bozeman and F. M. Letcher were appointed to assist the clerk in making a digest of the letters. Geo. E. Brewer, who was this year made clerk, and held that or the moderator's place in the body until removing to East Alabama, was a young man who joined the church at Rockford under the pastorate of J. M. Butler in 1854. The next year he was a delegate from Rockford, and has always been a member when in the bounds, and an almost regular visitor when out of them. He was at this time County Superintendent of Education. The next year he was elected to the House of Representatives, and in 1859 to the Senate. In 1860 he yielded to the impressions to preach, and gave up political life, unless holding the position of Adjutant and Inspector General of the State for 1866 be an exception. When ordained in the fall of 1860, he was called to the care of Wetumpka church for two Sundays. The other two were given to Concord and Poplar Springs. His ministerial work was interrupted by his going to the army in Feb. 1862. In 1867 he returned fully to the work of the ministry, and has since had all his time occupied in the Central, or East Alabama. He has had the confidence and esteem of his brethren, and rarely fails to be called upon to preach at the general gatherings of his people. In his ministry he has had two good church buildings erected; six repaired and improved, and a good pastor's home built, and helped three churches lift a burdensome debt. He has been moderately successful in gathering new recruits, but seems better adapted to indoctrinate, and stimulate to liberality.

A. T. Holmes was from Cuthbert, Ga., and was the president of the Central Institute. He was a finished scholarly man, of polished address. His sermons were

well prepared and delivered. He was highly esteemed the few years he was in the association. He returned to Georgia when he left the Institute, and still holds a good place in the esteem of Georgia Baptists.

James Russell was a strong and good preacher, and was a power for good thorough the many years he was with the association. No man perhaps had so much mind and Godly, and was a courtly Christian gentleman. He was a good preacher, a wise counselor, and reliable in all respects. But his crowning glory was the purity, refinement, and gentleness of his exalted Christian character, blended with a firm, but gentle unswerving fidelity to his convictions of right. J. J. Hullington was comparatively a young preacher, but he had already taken rank with the preachers of marked ability. He was at this time County Superintendent of Talladega, noted then for the number of leading men politically and legally who resided in it, men of wide repute; and also noted for its educational institutions. He remained an able preacher, constantly growing until his death about the close of the war. He was also a good pastor, a pure Christian, and fast friend. Hugh Carmichael was at this time in the prime of his manhood, and was a fine preacher, well educated, instructive, and possessing fine hortative power. He was nervous, filled with zeal, but tempered by wisdom and upheld with strength. He lived to a good age, and died in Chambers county, having spent most of his active years after the war in Georgia.

Oliver Welch was a fine old Virginia gentleman of wealth, education, refinement, and piety. He delighted to be with his brethren, and his conversation was almost always seasoned with scriptural allusions, or a strong vein of religious sentiment. His little pocket Testament was always with him, and though the Word was well written in the old man's mind, it need called for it, out came the little book and settled the point at issue. Though he came to Talladega among the Indians, in 1834, he never lost the polish of refined Virginia society. The Lawlers and Reynolds of Talladega were of his family.

B. T. Smith was professor of mathematics and chemistry in the Central Institute. He was also a practicing physician. He was a good preacher, a clear reasoner, and good writer. He remained in the association until sometime after the war, when he removed to West Point, where he died only a few years since. Two of his sons are prominent merchants and farmers of Chambers County.

The report of the board of Trustees was the first general subject of interest. They reported that they had secured the services of Rev. A. T. Holmes of Cuthbert, Ga., as president of the Institute for five years from 23rd of January, 1896. He was to have the property free of charge, and was to make the school what was contemplated by the body in its origin. He was obligated to return the property at the end of the lease in as good condition as when received, the wear of age excepted. He was also to keep a corps of good teachers. They reported that to date he had more than met their expectations, and that now they felt that the fond wishes and hopes of the brethren had fructified, so that the Institute was equal to any of like grade anywhere. Expenses had been reduced to the minimum. Tuition was \$40, \$32, \$24 or \$16 per session of two terms. Board, including everything, \$10.00 per month. The expense of the building and agent was \$908.23. There had been purchased a good \$500 apparatus for \$333. There was a debt on the institution of \$4000, but assets thought to be worth about \$2000 in collectible subscriptions. Funds were needed for beautifying and enclosing the grounds. The patronage was such in promise that it would require more buildings to accommodate it. Special correspondence was opened

for securing help, and inviting co-operation from the Tuskegee, Alabama, Coosa River, Liberty, Unity, Arabacochie, and Carey associations.

The report of A. T. Holmes, principal, to the Trustees was submitted in connection with their report. This showed the number for first term to be 32 pupils. The term 110. One pupil, Julius Norton of Montgomery had died. Pross, P. Savage and B. T. Smith were the assistant teachers. More apparatus was reported as necessary. A bell was needed. Some few books had been contributed as a nucleus of a library, a thing needed also for the school.

Business was suspended for special prayer to God for his blessings upon the Institute. The prayer was led by Elder Hankston. A very fine report on Ministerial Education was made from a committee of W. C. Barnes, J. D. Letcher, and J. M. Russell. There were two heads to it, 1st the nature of the education needed, and the kind demanded by the denomination, and 2nd the means by which the demand may be supplied. It was argued that we needed some thoroughly educated men to meet the scholarship of the world and our opponents, and the foes of the bible. We needed also a large number of men with a good common and English education. For the first class we need but one great school for the Southern Baptists. For the second we need a number of colleges such as Howard and institutions like our own Central. This demand could be met by endowing our colleges and high schools, and endowing a Theological Chair in each. Griffin, Suttle, and G. Smith were appointed to fill blanks in report of Board of Trustees.

J. W. Jeter stated that he was the only member of the committee on Missions of Southern Baptist Convention present, and that he was not prepared with a report. Bro. Stout moved the addition of A. T. Maxwell and A. B. Callaway to the committee, which was done.

William Chancellor made the report on Temperance, setting forth that a low type of temperance sentiment prevailed in many churches. That too much of a habit was indulged in by many in visiting grogshops, mingling, treating and drinking with the drunken. The report elicited considerable discussion. Some sentences were regarded as too strong, while others thought they were fair utterances of truth. Russell, Carmichael, Stout and Skipper took prominent parts in the discussions. A resolution attached and some few sentences were stricken out.

A. T. Holmes from the committee on Southern Baptist Publication Society reported the condition of the world as such as to awaken emotions truly sublime. Science and arts were making astounding developments, knowledge was being widely diffused among the masses; the nations of the earth are agitated; kings tremble upon their thrones; the world is approaching a tremendous crisis; and our own Southland lay in the track of a tornado that threatened to bury it in destruction. There was a divine conservative power which could arrest and shape the tempest, and that power is the religion of the bible. Any other hope is vain. That power can be utilized by the preached and printed word. Therefore the need of qualified preachers, and the Publication Society to furnish the printed page. To enable the society to perform the work, more funds are needed. Reliable pledges have been secured, that by June 1897 will add \$20,000, thus making a capital stock of \$40,000, but at least \$50,000 are needed. The managers have on hand a plan for furnishing an approved catechism for the oral instruction of the colored people. Also a plan for furnishing a \$10.00 library for poor ministers. The associations are asked to co-operate with them, and we ought to do so. Two resolutions were appended, viz:

sustained by us as faithful stewards in the service of the Great Head of the church? Do the names of Bowen, Clarke, Priest, Buckner, etc., when sounded in connection with their respective missions excite within us those emotions, which our relation to them and our common master would naturally produce? If Paul was debtor to the Greek and the Barbarian, because Christ had saved him by his grace, certainly we are debtors for the same reason to the destitute, the benighted, and the lost in every land."

"The report of Bro. Stout from a committee to draft a plan for ministerial education is given in full. "In regard to a Southern Theological College, your committee sympathize with the action of the late committee, and would hope that at their adjourned meeting to be held at Louisville, Ky., next May, that the body may devise a comprehensive practical plan that will unite the denomination in the South in building up such an institution as should meet our wants.

"Your committee are deeply impressed with the importance of having the theological department of Howard College speedily placed in a condition to meet the wants and wishes of our churches, in the education of our young men called of God to the gospel ministry, who, in providence, may be permitted to avail themselves of the advantages of the middle course of education suggested in the report.

"It occurs to your committee as a question of the greatest importance, and deepest interest, what provision ought to be made for such as are called of God, and approved by the churches, to whom these high advantages are not available.

"After the most anxious examination of the whole question involved, your committee, with diffidence, would present the following plan as being, in their judgment a good and practical one, viz.: That the board of the Central Institute be authorized and requested to make arrangements with the president for giving a course of biblical instruction in the elementary principles of theology.

"That the board of the Institute advise the Executive Board of the Association of the arrangements so made, so that the latter may make provisions to meet the incurred expense.

"That the churches be requested to make provisions for the boarding and other necessary expenses of such students as may be recommended by the churches of which they are members, to the Executive Board of the Association, and they undergo by them a satisfactory examination as to their Christian experience, call to, and qualification for the gospel ministry, and who are unable to meet such charge themselves.

"And your committee further recommend to the association the appointment of an Executive Board for the body, consisting of five members."

J. R. Steeley from committee on State of Religion reported that while some churches had been revived and were enjoying a good spiritual condition, others were cold and inactive. That the general religious tone was not as favorable as formerly. It asked those who had torn down their altars to re-erect them; to erect them where none had existed; and urged a general increase of the spirit of prayer.

To show the feeling entertained in these days toward the slaves, and the relationship felt to exist between them and the owners, the following resolution, offered by J. M. Russell, and adopted will be an index:

"Whereas, The nature of the relation that exists between Christian masters and their servants partakes much of the nature of that dependent relation which exists between parents and children in reference to their moral and religious training, as set forth by the scriptures of truth, it is, therefore, undoubtedly the duty of all Christian

"1. That the Southern Baptist Publication Society is worthy of the co-operation, confidence, and support of the entire Baptist family South.

"2. That it is the interest and duty of Southern Baptists to sustain and enlarge its operations."

The Committee on Nominations consisting of Platt Stout, D. A. Griffin, and R. Edwards, named for preaching Introductory Sermon, A. T. Holmes, with J. Nickols alternate; J. M. Russell, missionary sermon, J. D. Williams alternate. Board of Trustees, J. Hankston, W. M. Lindsey, W. C. Barnes, J. W. Jeter, A. T. Maxwell, A. B. Callaway, P. McKinney, Richard Smoot, J. D. Letcher, D. W. Bozeman, J. A. Pylant, F. F. Wood, and Owen Swindal.

A committee consisting of Stout, Steeley, Smoot, Cross, Russell, Barnes, and Letcher upon recommendations from report of trustees and ministerial education, suggested the names of the associations before given, which should be asked to cooperate in furnishing the Institute with the needed facilities for making it an institution which will command patronage from the whole State. It and the Talladega Baptist Institute were recommended as deserving schools for patronage by the Baptists for their sons; and the East Alabama Female Institute at Tuskegee, and the Lafayette Female Institute as worthy places for their daughters. They also recommended the appointment of a suitable agent to canvass the State for funds and patronage.

Bro. Newman of the Tuskegee proposed to be one of twenty who would pay \$1,000 by the next session of the association for the Institute.

Bro. Suttle asked for a committee to examine the report of the Depository Board, upon which was appointed D. A. Griffin, Guy Smith, A. Little, and W. C. Barnes. Their report was briefly as follows: "We find in the hands of the superintendent \$95.58 cash; in hands of J. A. Pylant \$16.20; E. T. Akins \$31.67; A. W. Bullard \$0.92; Jas. W. Bullard \$1.95; J. R. Steeley \$11.16; J. H. Colley \$1.20; books on hand \$50.00; subscription of 1854 \$87.52; total \$297.07. Your committee believe that the Book Depository has accomplished about all that it can do at Rockford; and we therefore recommend that the funds and books be turned over to the State Depository, or the Executive Committee to be used in our bounds as recommended at last session.

By motion of J. M. Russell, printing the digest of the letters was dispensed with, and the churches requested to give with their letters to the next session, a short history of the church; who have served them as deacons and pastors; incidents connected with the origin and history, etc., so as to furnish material for the history of the association. To accomplish the publication with the minutes the churches were asked to enlarge their minute funds.

The report on Missions of Southern Baptist Convention, made by A. T. Holmes, chairman, was a fine paper. He showed that the Lord gave us the world as our field of labor. The Convention recognized it by organizing a Board for Home work, and one for Foreign Work. The Home Work was confined to some destructions in the South, and the evangelization of the Indians in some of their tribes by Buckner, Murrow and others. The Foreign Work as yet embraced only the missions in China and Africa. This was but a slight attestation that we recognized our obligations. The questions put in the report were pertinent and striking. "Are we doing all we can for those who have not the gospel, whether at home or abroad? What have we done? What are we doing? Are our sympathies enlisted as they should be? Are we realizing our obligation? Are the missions of the Southern Baptist Convention

masters, as well as all others, to provide the best means of moral and religious instruction that can be done agreeably with the laws of the State.

"And whereas, This association has heretofore given advice upon this important matter, which we think is capable of being profitably amended, and which is, by the nature of the case, demanded by the churches, therefore be it

"Resolved, That we recommend our churches, to so enlarge their houses of worship as to accommodate all their servants, and that they take them with them on their regular meeting days, as they do their children, and see that they behave themselves while there, and in going to and from church. If it be impracticable to so enlarge their houses of worship as to accommodate them at the same time with the white congregation, then we advise that the churches make arrangements with their pastors that will enable them to preach at least one day out of the month to them, and that their owners leave them not to their choice, but see that each servant is decently prepared in time to go to meeting, and then go with them, or send his overseer, and require a similar observance of good order and subordination as he does of his children. And that the colored members of our churches be taught gospel discipline, by holding regular conferences with them. And we furthermore recommend our churches, that when they have negroes who wish to preach, let them undergo as rigid an examination as Paul recommends to Timothy."

The resolution was adopted, and upon motion of A. B. Gary the clerk was instructed to send a copy to the Southwestern Baptist, with a request that it be published as an educator to others.

Platt Stout offered a resolution which was adopted as follows:

"Resolved, That the powers and duties of the Executive Committee of this Association be, to take charge of and superintend all missionary and colporteur operations of the association, and such other business as shall be referred to it, to be carried out in vacation; and fully report to the body at the succeeding session; and that they have power to fill any vacancy that may occur in their own body."

The Executive Committee appointed was, A. T. Holmes, A. B. Callaway, W. M. Lindsey, I. W. Suttle, and T. L. Hudgins.

By motion of Bro. Stout, the books and assets of the Depository Board was turned over to this Executive Committee, and they given the discretion to employ a colporteur evangelist, or turn the funds over to the Alabama Baptist Bible and Colporteur Society.

Delegates were appointed to the State Convention, Liberty, Coosa River, The Kegee, Unity, Arbacoche, Carey and Alabama Associations.

The following standing committees, to report at next session were appointed, viz: On Missions of Southern Baptist Convention, Williams, Stout, and Smoot.

On State of Religion, Pylant, Steeley, and Guy Smith.
On Education, Holmes, J. W. Bozeman, and Guy Smith.
Sabbath Schools, Kendrick, R. Edwards, and Barnes.

Temperance, A. T. Maxwell, Skipper, and Jas. Walker.
Baptized 130; letter 136; restored 3; dismissed 213; excluded 41; died 8; total 1060. The financial exhibit for the year does not appear in minutes. Sabbath collection \$33.35.

More space has been given for a full report of the work of this session as a better idea of the character of the reports; of the men composing the body; and the spirit that animated it, at this time might be formed. The personnel, mental caliber, as well as the broad views, for the period, which marked this body for about ten years,

placed it along with the best of the State. But great advancement has been made since then as to the conception of duty owed by the denomination to the Master and the world. Had the same men enjoyed the present lights and advantages, with the stimulated movements that have arisen since 1880, the career of the Central in those days would have flashed out with a pleasing light indeed.

CHAPTER IV.

(SEVERE STRUGGLE WITH DEBT, AND A FINANCIAL CRISIS)

1857.

The thirteenth session was held with Union church from Oct. 3 to 6th, 1857. The sermon was preached by A. T. Holmes. Letters read by F. M. Law and J. W. Bozeman. Bankston and Brewer were re-elected moderator and clerk. It might here be noted that W. C. Barnes was treasurer, and had been from the first appointment, and remained so until his removal to Georgia. He was a very fine man; of good property, integrity, and piety. He was highly esteemed by his brethren as indicated by the places of trust into which he was put. He had been this year, among five others, a candidate for the lower House of the Legislature, but Brewer, who was also a candidate, distanced him and was elected. The race was not specifically against Barnes. Coosa was then entitled to three representatives, and a senator.

Pethany, a newly constituted church, was received. This church was about six miles from Sylacauga. It was a right good church for awhile. But a disturbance got into it just after the war, growing out of political feeling between sympathizers with the Confederates and Federals which finally rent the church asunder. Macedonia church is what has grown out of the better element, while the other wing was only short lived.

The new ministers were Timothy J. Russell, and W. B. Weston. Russell was a brother of Jas. M. Russell, but quite different. He was large and corpulent. Well educated, a good writer, but not a forcible speaker. He was a fine presiding officer, and was often called to preside in meetings of which he was a member. He was genial of disposition, considerate of the feelings of others, and drew men close to him. He presided over the association from his first election until death vacated the place. Like Elder Bankston, his remains lie in the old cemetery of Mt. Zion church, of which he died a member. These two men presided over the body for twenty years. The association had some work done on the grave of Bankston. Russell's family were able to have marked his grave, but I do not know that it has been done.

W. B. W. Wilson, was an educated cultured man, sweet spirited and useful, but only lived a short while in the body.

The correspondents present were J. J. Bullington, Jas. Hurrow, Saml. Henderson, D. G. Daniel, and F. M. Law.

A preamble setting forth the violation of the constitution upon which the American Tract Society was founded, inhibiting itself from publishing anything offensive to the religious sentiments of its supporters; the inhibition was broken by the publication of sentiments offensive to the views of Southern Christian slaveholders. The preamble fully set forth the principles of the Society, its noble work, and expressed regret at this departure from its conservative course, and was followed by the following resolution offered by Elder Platt Stout, viz:

"Resolved, That as much as we regret the existence of the necessity, yet until the American Tract Society shall retrace her fatal false steps taken in the direction of interfering in any wise with the question of African slavery as it exists in the Southern States, and fairly and fully returns to original ground, we, as an association, will have no business or other patronizing connection with her, her officers, agents, or colporters; but when she shall so return, she will be entitled to and receive our confidence and co-operation as heretofore; and we recommend and advise the churches, whose messengers we are, for the same consideration to take the same course."

It was referred to a committee consisting of Stout, Williams, Nickols, A. T. Holmes, and T. J. Russell. The committee subsequently recommend the adoption of the resolution, and it was adopted.

On motion of J. D. Williams a special committee on colportage to act in concert with F. M. Law, agent of Alabama Baptist Bible Book Depository, was appointed, consisting of A. T. Maxwell, J. R. Steele, and A. B. Callaway. The matter before them, however, was so thoroughly brought before the body in the report of the Executive Committee, that this committee was discharged from consideration of the subject assigned it.

The preaching Saturday night and Sunday was done by Elders T. J. Russell, J. J. Bullington, J. M. Russell, missionary sermon, D. G. Daniel, and F. M. Law. The collection after missionary sermon was \$50.00.

The report on the State of Religion, submitted by J. A. Pylant presented rather a gloomy view, and spoke of declension in numbers and piety, and an increase of worldly spirit after fashion, dress, and political preferment. It attributed much of the decline to the more rapid means of communication developed in the past few years, but what was it then as compared with now? The facilities were then in their infancy as compared with now. Read this extract from the report: "The facilities for communication have so rapidly increased within the past few years, that places greatly distant from each other have been brought within a few hours travel; thus has the West been closely allied with the East, while the East acknowledges Europe for its next door neighbor. From this proximity to the great mart of fashion, where style and etiquette are more studied than righteousness—where decoration of the body fills the mind, while the soul goes unprovided for—where the *Age of Reason* finds its ablest advocates, and the simplicity of the Religion of Christ is contemned, we, from association, have in like manner become contaminated. Behold the resemblance of our seaboard cities to those of antiseptical France; then, how closely our less pretending towns and villages walk in the footsteps of the cities, and how nearly the country apes after the latter. Thus has been begotten a spirit of extravagance, a desire for appearance in society, to gratify which, demands the wearied exertion of heads of families from daylight's dawn till the sable curtain of night closes around. There occurs no time for reflection upon the Sacred Text, or the goodness of God, neither for the moral instruction and training of the young and tender plants committed to our care."

An excellent report on Temperance was submitted by A. T. Maxwell, chairman. The Executive Committee reported that no colportage work had been done. It recommended turning over the assets of the Book Depository of the association to F. M. Law, agent of the Alabama Bible and Book Depository, asking the Depository in its appointments to remember the needs of the association. It recommended colport-

age work to be done on the field. The body then raised, for this purpose, in cash and pledges \$330.00.

A very fine report on Ministerial Education was made by J. W. Bozeman. He commenced by announcing the Gospel Ministry the highest and holiest function man is called upon to fill. Its aim is the purity, prosperity, and happiness of man as a mortal being; his redemption and eternal salvation as an immortal being. The function being so high, qualifications were needed to meet the demand. These were two—1. The qualifications of the heart—this God must Give; 2. The qualification of the mind—this man must largely attain by his own efforts. Those who were able to secure proper mental training through their own means, would evidently do so—those who could not ought to be assisted by the churches, for God had appointed them to maintain to their best ability the most effectual proclamation of His truth. We need an educated ministry to hold the attention of a cultured audience; we need it to properly instruct the uncultured; we need it to meet educated infidelity and skepticism; we need it for the happiest presentation and illustration of Divine truth.

J. D. Williams from committee on Missions of Southern Baptist Convention, reported both Boards in debt, and crippled for want of means. The Domestic Mission Board had received \$42,420.54, of which \$19,953.95 was for Indian Missions. The Foreign Board was \$4,338.37 in debt. Had received only \$36,462.69 when it ought to have had \$100,000. There were then 600,000 Baptists in the South. The committee thought Alabama ought to raise \$10,000 for the Boards. Asked the churches of the association to try and send up fully their part of that amount.

Ibro Henrierson was granted the opportunity to present the claims of the South-western Baptist, and take subscriptions.

\$17.00 was raised to help old Ibro. Harrow.

Upon motion of Ibro. Steele correspondence was opened with the East Alabama Convention. A motion to become a member, offered by W. C. Barnes, by sending \$10.00, and ten delegates was voted down.

The report of the Trustees showed that circumstances had combined to prevent W. B. W. Weston, agent for the Institution, from securing much aid on the debt. They also reported that a good building had been erected by the citizens and Masonic Fraternity, the upper story for a lodge room, the lower for a female school. The school room had been given to the Trustees for the association. They had a good female school in operation under the superintendency of F. Smith Walkley. The Institute had had an attendance of 76 first term; 75 second term.

The report on Sabbath Schools was made by Asa Little. There were not many schools among the churches.

The usual standing committees were appointed.

The Board of Trustees for the Central Institute were Joseph Hankston, W. M. Lindsey, W. C. Barnes, A. B. Callaway, J. W. Jeter, A. T. Maxwell, P. McKinney, R. Smoot, J. D. Fletcher, D. W. Bozeman, J. A. Pylant, Owen Swindal, William Chancellor.

The Executive Committee were J. D. Williams, P. Stout, A. J. Terrell, R. Smoot, and A. T. Holmes.

Additions by baptism 73; letter 142; restored 11; dismissed 222; excluded 41; died 18; total 1774. Contributions \$582.95.

1858.

This session was held with Mt. Zion church, Coosa county, meeting on Oct. 2, 1858.

and lasting until the 5th. The sermon was preached by P. Stout, from Ps. 145:11. J. Bankston and Geo. E. Brewer were re-elected moderator and clerk. Visitors present were F. M. Law, J. L. M. Curry, J. A. Collins, J. J. Bullington, A. C. Baker, W. W. Mason, and Saml. Henderson. The only business of the evening was the appointment of the usual committees, receiving the above correspondents, and hearing the announcements for preaching at night and on Sunday. For night there was Steeley, Akins, Law, and T. J. Russell.

Three newly constituted churches joined, viz: Sardis and Mt. Moriah in Coosa, and Refuge in Tallapoosa. Liberty church from the Liberty Association, joined by letter.

Sardis is at Traveler's Rest, eight miles west of Rockford. It never developed much strength, nor was it progressive. Mt. Moriah was some twelve miles northwest of Rockford near Weogufka creek. Neither did it ever accomplish much for the cause. Refuge was also always a weak church, but better than either of the two preceding. It is about ten or twelve miles north of Tallassee. Liberty is about nine miles southwest from Dadeville. It was a small church, but had some earnest members who gave some tone to its work.

For Sunday it was Joel Nickols, J. A. Collins, and J. J. Bullington. The collection was \$41.05.

A committee of one from each district was the first business of Monday morning, whose duty it was to report on colportage, and provide for the continuance of the work. The committee consisted of Williams, Edwards, Barnes, and Steeley. It was also arranged to have preaching at different hours of the day, as the house where the body met was too small to accommodate the people. Russell and Akins at 11 A. M.; Bullington and Joseph Norton in afternoon; and Saml. Henderson and Steeley at night.

A communication was read from Secretary Tichenor of the Baptist Book Emporium, at Montgomery, tendering a donation to the association of \$50.00 worth of books. It was referred to the committee on colportage. In their report they recommended the reception with thankfulness, and that the Executive Committee take them in charge for final disposition.

The trustees reported that at the close of the last session of 1857, owing to his health, Bro. Holmes had resigned the presidency of the Institute. That as yet they had failed to fill his place, as only one well qualified was wanted, of the highest order. The financial condition was bad, as there rested upon the Institute a debt of \$3,883.09 and available means to meet it only \$530.05. The money was due, and the trustees were personally bound for it.

The Female Academy under Prof. Walkey was doing well. Pending a motion to refer to a special committee, an earnest discussion of the subject was had. Those who took part were Williams, Gregory, Henderson, Curry, and Nickols. Henderson and Curry made most excellent speeches, especially Curry. Brethren Gregory, and Nickols, became irritated at some things that had been said, or reported to have been said by some of those connected with the school, and in the discussion they were rather sharp in their utterances, and from then on they with quite a number of others never felt to give the school a hearty support. The trustees had worked with earnestness for the success of the school, had given time and money to it, and now it looked as though the brethren were about to let the whole weight of the debt fall on them. Some feeling originated here that was never entirely overcome. The school cause languished from now, until it finally collapsed. The discussion continued into

the afternoon session, when Mason, Collins, Adkins and Skipper took part. The report was finally referred to one from each district consisting of Marbury, Barnes, Williams, Caffee, and the moderator added. The report of this committee when made was this:

"First, That it is best, in our view, to postpone for one year the question of sale of the Institution, to give its friends an opportunity to pay it out of debt; and would recommend,

"Secondly, That the association, forthwith suspend its business, to allow all present the opportunity to give their obligations for such sums toward this object as they are willing to pay in two installments: one half payable first of January next, the other half the first of January, 1860.

"Thirdly, We recommend volunteers to be called for from the different districts of the Association to bring the subject before their churches, and the friends of education in their bounds, and receive the obligations for sums offered for relief of the Institution; and report to the board at the meeting of the East Alabama Convention in May next, to be held in the chapel of the Institute. We recommend the publication, in your minutes, of the report of the board referred to us." The report was adopted, and a subscription of \$481.00 was taken. Quite a number of brethren volunteered as agents to try to raise the amount.

The committee on Temperance, through Pylant reported that the temperance cause rather retrograding than advancing. R. Smoot reported that the Sabbath school cause was advancing, but not able to give full reports.

The report made by P. Stout on the missions of the Southern Baptist Convention was a very fine paper. He referred to the rapid annihilation of distance by ocean steamers, railways, and telegraphs, and the successful laying of the Atlantic cable, and anticipated that the time would come when in a few hours news would be heard from the distant cities of the East. He reported to the recent more liberal treaty with China, to the revelation of Africa's hidden glories as Livingston and Bowen were revealing them. The report showed that to Africa and China as fields we were confining our labors, but hoped the revolutions going on in Europe and elsewhere, would soon find us situated to enter.

A proposition from Tuskegee association through S. Henderson, to combine with her in colportage work was considered upon motion of Brewer in committee of the whole. The committee agreed to take the funds of the association, and empower it to them in the hands of the Executive Committee of the association, and empower it to act in conjunction with the Tuskegee, if it could be satisfactorily done.

The report was adopted by the association, and the Executive Committee appointed, consisted of Williams, Stout, Terrell, Smoot, and Lindsey.

A periodical printed by J. D. Williams, called the "Southern Dial and African Monitor," devoted to the defence of our system of slavery from the Bible, was heartily commended, and patronage to it urged.

Bro. Drury Harrington and Weston being in feeble health and somewhat circumscribed in means, about \$40.00 was raised to help them.

The Constitution, Articles of Faith, and Decorum were directed to be printed with the minutes.

The Board of Trustees were Bankston, Lindsey, Barnes, Jeter, A. Maxwell, P. McKinney, Smoot, Letcher, D. W. Bozenan, Pylant, O. Swindle, Callaway. Prof. Paschal Carter, of Georgetown College, Ky., was made principal of the Institute.

Baptisma 207; letter 188; voucher and restoration 28; dismissed 214; excluded 33; died 17; total 2035. \$341.70 were the contributions.

1859.

The fifteenth session was held with Weogufka church Oct. 1st to 4th, 1859. The sermon was by Williams from 1 Cor. 15:58. The new churches were Lebanon, Ridge Grove, and Mt. Calvary, all newly constituted. Of these, Lebanon 11 miles north of Wetumpka is the only one that made history by her work. She has been at one time very strong, but always in good working order, and is situated in a beautiful country. She has had some gracious meetings; and two of the most pleasant sessions of the association have been held with her.

J. D. Williams was elected moderator, and Geo. E. Brewer re-elected clerk. The visitors and correspondents were Dr. Basil Mowly, Sr., General Missionary for Alabama, J. J. Bullington, Daniel Wallace, Russell Holman of Domestic Mission Board, and Brother Lide treasurer of Howard College. Brethren Stout and Steele, appointees to preach missionary sermons, begged to be excused, and asked the committee to appoint Dr. Manly to preach it. It was so done. The sermon was a treat indeed, and long remembered by those who heard it. Elder Holman preached at 2 P. M.

Rocky Mount from Talladega, and Providence from the Carey came back by letter.

The new ministers were Isaiah Holmes and Rufus Figh. Holmes was an uneducated man, but of fervent spirit. His strongest fort was his power of song and exhortation. He departed from us for a while just after the war, in the trouble that grew up at lethany out of bitter political feeling following the war. But he afterwards returned, and is still living. Rufus Figh was a sweet spirited man, characterized more for gentleness, and sweetness of spirit than for mental strength. He had a fair education, and all the advantages of travel. He took a trip through the East when such trips were rare. He lectured upon his travels much in the State and in Georgia.

The report of the board of Trustees was referred to a special committee consisting of Suttle, T. J. Russell, W. T. Hatchett, W. G. McWilliams, and Jas. Walker. The committee subsequently reported back that submitted to them by the trustees. This showed that Prof. P. Carter had leased the Institute for five years, and had associated Prof. Andrew Goddard with him. The school had grown in interest. Prof. Carter had resigned, and the resignation was accepted. The trustees had committed the school to Prof. Goddard, and were well pleased with his administration, believing he would meet the demand, and give efficiency to the school. He was one of us, and had a local interest. The Female Academy was doing well under the management of Miss Emma C. Mason. Elder Stout had been appointed agent for the Institution, but circumstances had prevented his traveling to any extent, and comparatively nothing had been done to relieve the financial embarrassment. The notes had been extended to January 1860, when they must be paid. They amounted to \$1,200. There were on hand only about \$500 in solvent notes. They asked the body if they would raise the money to lift the debt from them, or must the trustees, to secure themselves, suffer the loss of the property to the association?

E. T. Aekin in the report on the State of Religion showed there had been quite an improvement in additions—a deep tone of piety—a better acquaintance with the doctrines of salvation—and greater zeal in the work of the Master—and more sympathy for the lost.

Bro. Stout made a long and good report upon the general subject of education, and then dwelt especially upon the need of an educated ministry, not educated for the ministry, but being called of God, educated better to *prepare* him to do the work to which *God* had called.

The report of the Executive Committee was highly gratifying. They with the Tuskegee Association had jointly employed Deacon J. A. Pylant as coportier for eight working months at \$500.00. He had most satisfactorily done his work. He had sold of Bibles, books etc., 1862 volumes, worth \$1,664.97. His praise was in all the churches. He had stimulated the organization of a good many Sunday schools, and given a fresh impetus in several directions. The committee had given the \$50.00 in theological works donated by the Emporium to the association, in lots of \$5.00 each to Brethren Atkins, Steele, Timmerman, Harrington, Colley, McDermaid, Isaiah Holmes, J. H. Norton, and Brewer. There was still \$45.00 worth there to the credit of the association. The association never had such a satisfactory year in its coportier work. The board owed nothing, and had increased its capital \$63.17.

Baptized 214; letter 203; restored 23; voucher and watchcare 10; dismissed 240; excluded 46; died 14; total 2289. Contributions about \$300.00.

1860.

The sixteenth session was held with Shiloh church from Tuesday Oct. 2nd to Friday 5th, 1860. The sermon was preached by T. J. Russell from Jno. 13:35. T. J. Russell was elected moderator and Geo. E. Brewer re-elected clerk. No new churches. The new ministers were A. G. Rains from Cary, and G. W. Bearden and J. H. Norton, newly ordained. Rains was a young man and promised to be quite useful, and for a few years took a prominent stand in the ministry. But taking up the views of J. R. Graves, in after years, on the restricted communion, confining the participants to the members of the local church, and following largely to the logical deductions flowing from it, he lost companionship to a good extent with his brethren, and finally became almost a recluse. Bearden was a good man, but without education, and largely devoid of strength of intellect to supply the deficiency, he never became prominent. Norton was a young man who developed into a man of fair local influence. He died some years ago near Notasulga, Ala.

The corresponding visitors were S. A. Creath, J. J. Bullington, S. Henderson, W. W. Mason, and L. McDonald. Creath represented the Foreign Mission Board, Henderson the Southwestern Baptist, and Stout, Bullington, and Jas. Russell the East Alabama Convention.

B. T. Smith read a well prepared circular letter based upon Rom. 8:28-30. A recess was taken at 11 A. M., and Smith preached from the theme "The Covenant of Redemption is the only true ground of hope for success in missionary enterprise." A collection of \$20.00 was taken.

The report of board of Trustees was submitted, and referred to Jas. Russell, B. Skipper, A. H. Kendrick, Wm. Adkins, and S. Hughes. The committee reported back subsequently that the agents appointed at the last session failed to raise the needed funds by the time specified. The debt had to be paid. It was resolved to sell the property. Extensive notice was given, and on the 1st Monday in February, 1860, the property was sold to the highest bidder, Thos. C. Bragg, for \$4,035. This with what funds could be commanded would liquidate the debt, or so nearly so, that the Trustees would present the matter no more. This was to be a final report. They thanked the body for the confidence and courtesy extended them. They recom-

mended that as the Female school was not of sufficient magnitude to engage the attention of the body, recommended its donation to a local board, who could make it effective as a local institution. The recommendation was adopted.

The church at Wetumpka, in her letter, called attention to the fact, that with increased numbers and means the body was doing less for missions than in her earlier years, and asked the churches to begin a better course.

The association took steps toward providing for the salary of Bro. Steeley who had been employed by the East Alabama Convention as missionary, but who was unpaid. His labors had been principally in the association. \$60.00 was raised, and \$40.00 sent for Domestic Missions were paid him then.

The Executive Committee's report showed that only Wetumpka church with \$30.00, and Rockford with \$10.00 had responded to the call for funds to employ a colporteur, so none had been employed.

The mutterings of the coming storm of war had already sounded in the distance, and Bro. E. Holzclaw's resolution was adopted, setting apart Friday before the 1st Sabbath in November as a day of prayer, humiliation, and fasting to Almighty God, deprecating his wrath, and invoking his favor and blessings upon the Union.

A committee had been appointed the year before to report the best means for raising missionary funds. They were not ready with the report, and Bro. A. T. Maxwell was added to the committee.

Bro. Stout offered resolutions urging the churches to meet every Sunday for worship, whether they had a preacher or not, and urging every church to have a Sunday school.

Baptized 210; letter 186; restored 23; dismissed 282; excluded 43; dead 15; total 2338. Contributions \$308.10. A financial depression had prevailed from 1857, which had much to do with the loss of the Institute, and reduced contributions.

1861.

The seventeenth session was held with Concord church Oct. 5 to 8th, 1861. The war had commenced, and many had gone to the army, among them Bro. Rains, who had been appointed to preach the sermon. In his absence Bro. M. T. Sumner preached from 1 Kings 19:13. No new churches. Ridge Grove had merged with Salem. The new ministers were Geo. E. Brewer, (ordained the year before, and pastor of the church with which the body was in session, and also of Wetumpka and Poplar Springs.) M. W. Reagan, and E. G. Foster. Brethren Reagan and Foster were not with the body long enough to impress themselves upon its history. Russell and Brewer were re-elected as moderator and clerk.

Corresponding visitors present were S. A. Creath of the Foreign Mission Board, M. T. Sumner of Domestic Mission Board, W. C. Davidson, brethren Shearer and Ray from the Unity.

Bro. Jas. Russell read the circular letter, and his theme was the Lord's Supper. It was a good paper. In view of the surroundings, upon motion of Bro. Brewer, it was determined to open with a half hour of prayer service each session.

The preaching was on Saturday night by Jas. Russell; at 10 A. M. Sunday, S. A. Creath; 11 A. M. Geo. E. Brewer; 3 P. M. M. T. Sumner. Reagan was to preach at 11, Monday, and Akins at 3 P. M.

Bro. Sumner spoke to Domestic Missions, and secured \$189.65 in cash and pledges. Bro. Creath spoke to Foreign Missions and secured \$99.25 in cash and pledges.

The committee on redistricting the association, through Brewer, chairman, recommended establishing permanent boundaries so as to avoid special action in locating each church, and suggested the lines between Townships 21 and 22, and Ranges 19 and 20. The recommendation was adopted.

A suitable report was made upon the death of our beloved and useful brother, J. W. Jeter, from the committee composed of Jas. Russell, H. Skipper, and K. Edwards. A fund of \$6.18 was contributed to help furnish the soldiers with Testaments. It was agreed by the messengers to take collection for this purpose from each of the churches at the first meeting; and Geo. E. Brewer was appointed as agent for the association in the management of the funds. He was instructed to make no move in the matter until the 3rd week in November, so as to give the churches opportunity for collecting and forwarding funds to him. \$34.25 was raised for Bro. Steeley as balance due him from East Alabama Convention.

A warm, or rather earnest discussion arose during the session, upon the introduction of a resolution commending the cause of States in seceding, and conducting the war, and declaring our moral and material support to it. Brewer and Skipper opposed the introduction of resolutions, of the kind into the body, not that they did not give their heartiest support to the efforts of the Confederacy, but the precedent was wrong in a purely religious meeting. Others took a different view, citing the action of religious bodies during the Revolutionary War. There was no difference in sentiment as to the loyalty to the South, but the arguments against the resolution prevailed, and it was tabled.

Baptized 73; letter 177; restored and voucher 17; dismissed 123; excluded \$8; died 20; total 2259. Contributions \$413.25.

W. M. Lindsey had been treasurer since the removal of Barnes.

1862.

The war was now raging in its full force. Many were off to the battlefield when the eighteenth session was held at Antioch Oct. 5 to 7th, 1862. Akin who was to preach the sermon, and Brewer to prepare the circular letter, had both led companions to the war. The sermon was preached by B. T. Smith. No circular letter was prepared.

T. J. Russell was elected moderator and W. M. Lindsey clerk. J. J. Bullington was the only correspondent. Sermons were preached during the session by Steeley, Bullington, Williams, Russell, Skipper, Smith, Harrington, Holmes, and Lilly Rose, a colored brother. He was a fine old man, and a good preacher, surpassing many white brethren in his pulpit ability. He was sweet in spirit, and without blemish in character. The writer was once his pastor, and knew him well, and often enjoyed his sound sweet talks about Christ and his saving grace. There were several colored members of the church at Wetumpka both male and female who adorned the doctrines of God their savior. There was another colored preacher in those days, Gilbert Crawford, who was a good preacher, to whom the whites loved to listen, and who was occasionally appointed to preach at the gatherings of the whites.

I once saw Bro. H. E. Talliaferro throw his arms around Gilbert in Poplar Spring church, while tears of gladness rolled down his face, drawn from their fountains by the pathos with which Gilbert had told the story of redeeming love.

J. M. Maxwell was elected treasurer.

Resolutions were passed calling upon the churches to look to the families of the brethren in the army, and see that their needs were supplied. And memorializing the Legislature to levy a tax sufficient to provide for their maintenance. Three new

preachers names appeared this year, W. R. Connell, Mitchell Morris, and N. H. Williams. These preachers, however, never entered much into the history of the body. Williams was an able preacher, but remained only a short time, afterwards going to Bibb county. A shadow fell upon him there, and his usefulness was largely stopped.

The baptisms were 131; letter 105; restored 5; dismissed 91; excluded 39; died 47; total 2662. The contributions were light, and embraced army colportage and Indian Missions.

1863.

The session for 1863 was held with Poplar Springs from Oct. 3rd to 5th. The war was now raging in all its fury. All thoughts and efforts were bent toward maintaining the independence of government assumed for ourselves, and supporting the people at home and the soldiers in the field. Most of the able bodied men from all ranks and professions were at the front, as soldiers, chaplains, surgeons, and nurses. The homes were like the homes of widows and orphans, but yet with brave hearts the women carried on their old housework, with all its additions of multiplied home manufactures of what had formerly been obtained from markets, besides superintending the out-door affairs. In the early part of the war much success attended the Confederate arms, but this summer fortune turned against them. The 4th of July, so long a gala day, was this year filled with sad memories, for a mortal wound had been inflicted upon our country. About 70,000 soldiers were lost to her armies by the surrender of Vicksburg and the defeat at Gettysburg. Hardly a home failed to have furnished a victim or more upon the altar of patriotism. When the body met, so many familiar faces were gone, some for always, and probably most of the others never to return, sadness marked all faces, but determination to stand by what was felt to be a righteous cause was stamped upon their features. Prayer was much engaged in during the session.

The sermon was preached by V. D. Harrington. No new churches. A Christian and Hardy Jones were the new preachers. Christian was in the body only a year or two, and not much engaged in the ministry. He was not a preacher of much force, having devoted most of his time to secular affairs. Hardy Jones was a preacher of ordinary capacity, and figured for many years in the body as a useful man, esteemed by his brethren. He is now in the Unity, and has been for some years. Christian moved to Mississippi. Jones had a son, J. L. Jones, who promised well, but death soon cut him down.

Russell and Lindsey were re-elected. The preaching was done by Russell, Christian, Norton, Bullington, Colley, and Limmerman. Bullington's missionary sermon was said to have been one of the ablest and most pathetic ever preached in the association. It was followed by a collection of \$156.85. But the money now was depreciated Confederate bills.

Hullington and Fluiter, from the Coosa River, were the only correspondents. No reports are printed in the minutes for several years, if any were made.

Baptized 106; letter 69; restored 11; dismissed 96; excluded 19; died 16; total 3120. Contributions 734.70 Confederate money.

1864.

The twentieth session was held with Mt. Zion church, Tallapoosa, Oct. 1st to 3, 1864. The war was still raging. The Confederacy still struggled for the maintenance of her life and principles, but it was against fearful odds, and she was sadly dismembered.

She had been cut through along the line of the Mississippi River, the Mobile and Ohio Railroad and from Nashville to Savannah.

I. H. Colley preached the sermon. Russell was re-elected, and W. F. Shumate was made clerk. 18 churches had no representation, and a number of others only one each. There was no new preacher except Shumate, who was a licentiate. The preaching was done by Shumate, Colley, J. D. Williams, Jas. Russell, and Limmerman. No correspondents except from the Liberty. O. C. Bentley was elected treasurer. Collection after missionary sermon \$171.55.

The circular letter, on Practical Godliness was read by T. J. Russell. The Report on Domestic Missions called attention to the death of two prominent members connected with our mission work, Revs. S. A. Creath and Reuben Ford; the former a victim to disease contracted in camp, where he pursued his mission work; the latter of exposure and suffering in the Penitentiary of Nashville for four months, rather than surrender principle to the despotic demand of Federal usurpation. Also to the death of William Hornbuckle, for 18 years treasurer of Domestic Mission Board. He was beloved, and faithful to every trust. 31 pastors had their salaries supplemented by the Board. Many missionaries had been sustained in the army, and especially about the hospitals. 77 missionaries had been sustained, and the salaries of 9 army chaplains had been supplemented by it. \$36,993.60 had been expended for Bibles and Testaments, tracts, and religious newspapers for the soldiers. They reported seven regiments of Indians in the Confederate army. They had continued the salaries of Buckner, Hogue, and Slevier among the Indians in the Territory; and of Rev. Alfred Corn in his mission to the Cherokees in North Carolina.

The committee on deceased ministers made a touching notice of the death of the old patriarch Joseph Blankson, who had stood on the walls of Zion for 44 years, proclaiming salvation through Christ. Alpo M. D. Reagan had died. He had been a Methodist preacher until four years before, when becoming convinced of the truth as held by the Baptists he had come to them. He was a teacher by profession, but preached earnestly and zealously as opportunity presented.

Baptized 196; letter 83; restored 10; dismissed 58; excluded 34; dead 34; total 1733. These figures are for the churches represented. Contributions \$687.15.

CHAPTER V.

(THE WAR ENDED FOLLOWED BY YEARS OF POVERTY.)

1865.

The war was now over. The survivors had returned to their long neglected homes to find homes and farms sadly wasted and going to ruin. Their negroes were free, and they could no longer command their labor. There was no money to hire them. While many—very many—negroes understood freedom to be exemption from work, and acted accordingly, still there were many from habit, and others from real regard and affection stayed with their old owners, and helped to repair the desolations as might best be done under the existing conditions. The South was overpowered, but not conquered, nor did she admit she was wrong in principle in the struggle made. But overcome she accepted the situation, and with all the heart left, went to work to build up again upon the ruins of the past. Under such circumstances the brethren came together once more after years of separation, distress, and death, such

as were left, to again mingle their voices in praise to God, to listen to the Master's ambassadors tell his will, and to counsel as to how they could best carry out the great commissions. But years were to pass away before real and effective work should again be resumed.

Glad indeed were the greetings of these old veterans of the cross, and veterans of bloody war, as they looked into the faces of comrades that for four years had not been seen—and the four seemed double four. They were glad, and hearty was the grasp as hand clasped hand again, as the soft winged dove of peace hovered over them. But soon tears would glisten upon the cheeks, tears of sadness, as one after another loved brother's name was called, and it would be said he is dead. He sleeps in Virginia, or Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, or Georgia. How fitting the name of the place we met.

Good Hope was the place where the twenty-first session met, Sept. 30th, 1865. The sermon was by T. J. Russell, Matt. 22:42. T. J. Russell, and Geo. E. Brewer were re-elected. Holly Springs and Olive Branch newly constituted churches were added. Shady Grove objected to Olive Branch, but under the labors of a committee the matter was reconciled. Holly Springs was in the northwestern part near Union Springs. Olive Branch was some six miles southwest of Rockford. Neither were ever very strong churches.

Correspondents were G. W. Gunn, J. H. Norton, B. H. Timmerman, Wm. Harrington, J. M. Russell, and I. Phillips. The preaching was done by Akins, Williams, Skipper, Dunn, and Brewer.

The following communication from Judge W. P. Chilton was read and referred to a committee consisting of brethren T. J. Russell, B. T. Smith, Lindsey, Callaway, Walker, Brewer, and Skipper.

"To the Moderator and Brethren of the Central Association:
 "DADSVILLE, ALA., Sept. 27th, 1865.

"Dear Brethren:—I withdraw for a time from business which brought me to this place, to attend to the Master's business. I trust my heart is inditing a good matter, and I beg your prayerful consideration of it. It is this: Our Zion is divided. Instead of one fold and one Shepherd, we have many folds. Instead of being one, as the blessed Redeemer and His Father are one, we are many—divided into factions—Missionaries, Primitives, Campbellites, Whiteites, etc., etc. All this is wrong. Shall no effort be made to rectify and correct it? Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there none among us, none who are able, by the grace of our Divine Master, to set on foot some plan by which all difficulties to our union, all obstacles which separate us, can be surmounted, and peace and harmony be restored? I believe this can be done; and your body may become the initiator of this great measure, by appointing, say three brethren, as commissioners to confer with a similar commission to be appointed by the Baptists who differ with us, to agree with us on terms of reconciliation, and report the same to their respective bodies for their confirmation or rejection.

"Brethren think of this matter, and see if your wisdom cannot devise some plan by which we can have peace and union, and thus promote the glory of God, and the welfare of our race. May the good Lord prosper, and preside over your deliberations.
 Yours in Christ,
 "W. P. CHILTON."

The committee recommended concurrence with the object in view, and named W. P. Chilton, T. H. Watts, and J. L. M. Curry as the commissioners on the part of the Baptists. They also asked all the other associations whose sessions were yet to

be held, to endorse these as commissioners, thereby making them responsible representatives of our branch of the family. The association unanimously adopted the recommendation. Others did likewise. But nothing came of the effort made.

Lindsey was elected treasurer.
 The circular letter was by B. T. Smith, and the subject, the duty of studying God's Word.

The church at Liberty West sent an inquiry as to whether the colored membership of the churches, who had left the homes of their owners without the consent of said owners, could properly be granted letters in fellowship. The answer was; that if they left prior to the enforcement of the President's Proclamation of freedom, they were in disorder, and could not be granted letters. But if since, they were entitled to them.

A committee had been appointed, of which W. M. Lindsey was chairman, to consider the relation we sustained to the colored race. The committee reported a lack of time for mature deliberation, but recommended that, considering all the influences that had been brought to bear to estrange them from us, an enlarged Christian charity should mark our bearing toward them, in order to win back their confidence. 2. That churches and pastors extend every facility for their moral and religious training, and allow them to hold their former relations to us in the churches. 3. That their elevation as a race is strongly demanded by the general interests of society. 4. The planting of large provision crops was recommended as an imperative demand for the benefit of both races in our impoverished condition.

\$56.62 was raised for the benefit of old Bro. Hill.

The death of Elder Joel Nickols was suitably noticed. He was 63 years old; baptized in 1821 at Flam church, Montgomery Co.; ordained in 1835, in Talbot Co. Ga.; came to Chambers 1836; to the central in 1838; died April 9th 1865.

Baptized 194; letter 96; restored and voucher 17; dismissed 128; excluded 34; died 36; total 2304. Contributions \$79.40.

1866.

The twenty-second session was held with Shady Grove church Oct. 6th to 9th 1866. The sermon by J. W. Steeley. The former moderator being sick, was absent, and the body was called to order by Geo. E. Brewer, clerk. I. W. Suttle was elected moderator, and Geo. E. Brewer not living in the bounds of the association, W. M. Lindsey was elected clerk. The country was so prostrated from the war that as yet correspondence had not been resumed. The preaching was done by Colley, H. T. Smith, Brewer, Jones, and Rains. The collection after the missionary sermon by Smith was \$14.78. This indicates how scarce money was.

On Monday the circular letter was read by Geo. E. Brewer, subject, "Feet Washing." He assumed it was designed by the Savior as a perpetual ordinance, a symbol of the Incarnation of the Son of God, as the Supper symbolized his sufferings and death, and Baptism his burial and resurrection, thus fully symbolizing all that Christ was, became, and did for man's redemption. The letter produced a profound impression, but as there was a difference of opinion the adoption was not found for, but the hearty endorsement of many was given, and an enlargement of the minute fund was made to have it printed in them. It was so done.

W. P. Mackey was made treasurer. Elder Rains from committee on correspondence reported that the State Convention had endorsed the nomination made by this association of Chilton, Watts, and Curry to represent the Baptists in any Conference

that might be raised for an attempted union of branches of the Baptist family in Alabama. It also urged a better representation of the associations in the Convention.

Bro. B. T. Smith's resolution was adopted, that in view of the recent political changes, all the privileges of church membership, except that of controlling us by numbers, be extended to our black members. If they will not conform to our selection of officers &c., they should be accorded the privilege of forming separate organizations.

A note of grateful thankfulness from Jos. Hill was presented by S. B. Ray, for kindness shown him by the body.

It was requested of the churches to send annually funds for Bro. Hill's help, who had now been in the ministry over 70 years. \$16.25 was added to Sunday's collection, and was given to Bro. Ray for Hill's benefit.

Baptized 130; letter 110; restored 16; dismissed 247; excluded 84; died 28; total 2449; contributions \$150.00.

1867.

In its twenty-third session the association met with Union Springs church, Oct. 5 to 7th, 1867. The sermon was preached by W. M. Davis from Matt. 5:16. The moderator was absent, and Lindsey, the clerk, called the body to order. Geo. E. Brewer was made temporary moderator, and afterwards elected as such, and Lindsey, clerk, and R. P. Mackey, treasurer.

Correspondents were Saml. Hendersen, W. W. Mason, A. McKee, A. Frasier, Danl. Wallis.

The preaching was done by Atkins, Colley, Davis, Rains, Henderson, and Brewer. Collection \$11.00.

The circular letter was prepared by T. J. Russell, and sent up by him. It was referred to a committee of Davis, Hart, and Henderson. The letter was an earnest exhortation to growth in divine life, to thankfulness to God for the return of better times to our land, for the gracious revivals of the year, and exhortations to the churches to support their pastors so as to separate them from secular pursuits.

The new ministers were W. M. Davis, O. M. Lucas, G. Parker, J. M. Willis, A. G. Reckham, S. W. Speer, W. H. Bailey, and J. Nelson. Of these, the only ones who were much identified with the work of the ministry were W. M. Davis and S. W. Speer. The others were good and useful men, but preached only occasionally. W. M. Davis was an excellent and consecrated preacher, and though not long in the association he left his impress upon it. He went to Georgia about 1868 or 1869, and has spent most of the time since, there and in Florida, at Lake City. He still lives, having returned to Georgia about a year since. S. W. Speer was developing rapidly into a preacher of power when death cut him down at the threshold of what promised to be a very useful life.

The committee on Deceased Ministers gave a fitting tribute to the memory of one of our wisest and best ministers, Platt Stout, who died Oct. 1st, just before the meeting of the body. Among other things they say of him: "Elder Stout was among the purest of saints. Perhaps no man in our State ever had a more excellent character than he. As a preacher he was clear, sound, sensible, and earnest. His life was a commendation of piety, known of all who knew him. He laid not up for himself treasures upon earth, but in heaven he laid them up." He was worthy of all that was said of him, for the writer knew him well, and has never seen a purer, nobler

man. He was the father of John Stout who impressed himself upon South Carolina much as did his father upon Alabama, only he became more prominent, owing to the changed condition of the times. Just about one year ago John died in Dallas, Texas, having sickened during the convention, and was carried home a corpse to sleep in the soil of South Carolina, where God had given him a large field of usefulness.

Bro. Henderson urged the claims of the Southwestern Baptist.

A collection of over \$64.00 was raised for Domestic Missions under an appeal from Bro. Brewer.

Brethren Rains, Davis, Skipper, and A. T. Maxwell were appointed to present the Articles of Faith with proof texts to the next session. Bro. Patrick McKinney was made custodian of the funds for Bro. Hill, being more convenient than Ray. \$51.80 was sent for him.

Baptized 305; letter 204; restored 27; dismissed 201; excluded 61; died 9; total 2463. Contributions about \$165.00. Bro. Brewer had spent all the year as missionary, preaching only to Lebanon as pastor. This was a year of the largest ingathering of the association in its history except one.

1868.

The 24th session was held with Providence church, Tallapoosa county, Oct. 3 to 5th, 1868. This was a rainy time, there being a heavy fall of it, so that many of the members reached there drenched. The sermon was by J. H. Colley from Eph. 2:19-20. The clerk being absent B. T. Smith acted temporarily. The letters were read by Jas. Walker and Lewis Maxwell.

Geo. E. Brewer was re-elected Moderator, and B. T. Smith clerk. One new minister, J. B. Weatherly. He was a man of good education and good character, but devoid of the magnetism so essential to effective pulpit work. He remained in the association only two or three years. He was for awhile chaplain of the 46th Alabama Regiment Alabama Volunteers during the war. Jas. Russell was chaplain of the same regiment also for awhile. Russell removed from the association, having gone to Texas in the winter of 1865-66. Way-side, a newly constituted church eight miles below Rockford was received at this session. It has been a church of medium capacity. It would probably have been more efficient had Rains not trained them into the adoption of his peculiar views.

Those who preached were L. B. Abbott, of Liver Medicine fame, Geo. E. Brewer, R. T. Smith. The rain prevented a good attendance. After Mission sermon by Brewer, collection of \$12.68. On Monday, Hatchett Creek church, newly constituted, joined. This church has never developed much strength, but has quiet and order. It is near the Coosa River, west of Rockford. Bethany church had split as before stated from political considerations. The minority now appeared setting forth the grounds of the split. The association received this minority as the original church, because conforming to accepted Baptist usage. Jas. M. Hart was made Treasurer.

L. Gibson, Jas. Toland, T. G. Flournoy, and T. G. Abbott were the correspondents.

A. G. Rains prepared a circular letter of less than five lines. It was good, what there was of it. The committee on Documents recommended highly a catechism prepared by Sister B. T. Smith for young children in Sunday school. The manual script is still in existence in the hands of her daughter, Miss Kate Smith, River View, Ala. The writer of this has recently seen it, and believes it superior to anything of the kind he has seen.

There had been three deaths in the ministerial ranks of the association, T. J. Russell, Y. D. Harrington, and A. G. Beckham. Their deaths were properly noticed.

A preamble and resolutions was offered by Geo. E. Brewer and adopted, that occupied considerable attention for three sessions. They were as follows:

"Whereas, Baptists have always held, that connecting merely political designs with any of their religious meetings, or attempting to do that which belongs to the civil power of the land is *spiritual whoredom* and more severely condemned by the Word of God than the same offense against the civil law and,

"Whereas, The Committee of the Home Mission Society, raised, during their late session at New York, to respond to the communication submitted to them by the delegates from the Southern Baptist Convention, used the following language which presents a purely political end contrary to the purposes for which Christ's kingdom was established, viz: "Let us unite heart and hand, as far as we can, and the providence of God shall direct, * * * especially in aiding to lift up millions of freed-

men to the exercise of all the rights and duties of citizenship; therefore be it

Resolved by the Central Association of Alabama, 1st. That we cannot recognize as a purely Scriptural Baptist organization any body which can declare such an end as a part of the design for which it labors, and still more difficult to recognize one which declares it a special object. And we earnestly recommend the Southern Baptist Convention to withdraw correspondence from that body unless she recedes from the position. And, with regret, we declare that unless the correspondence between these two bodies is dropped, until such recession on the part of the Home Mission Society, it will become our imperative duty to withdraw all connection from the convention.

"and. Resolved, That a copy of this preamble and these resolutions be furnished the "Index and Baptist," at Atlanta, Ga., and the "Baptist," at Memphis, Tenn., for publication, and also a copy be furnished the secretary of the convention to be laid before that body at its next session."

The terms of the surrender had been violated, and military rule had been established over the South. The South was at this time putting forth her best efforts to prevent the adoption of what was known as the "Reconstruction Measures." By these it was proposed, in the reorganization, to make the South degrade herself by establishing negro citizenship and equality, and thus ruin the fairest part of her domain. Degrading conditions were artfully interwoven with essentially necessary ones in such form as to almost compel acceptance, or remain utterly disfranchised, and mere military sets. The whole aim appeared a determined effort to humiliate our people, and place us at the mercy of our late foes. The consciousness of these things; the depression arising from our poverty and political ruin; and the "Home Mission Society" asking Southern Baptists, at this time, to aid her to do these very things so hateful to us, seemed but adding grossness insult to injury, and caused the preamble and resolutions, radical as they were, to pass unanimously when brought to a vote.

Baptized 176; letter 152; restored 25; dismissed 44; excluded 48; died 17; total 2496. Contributions about \$125. The variation apparent in the totals in different years, is owing to absence of returns from some churches.

\$35.75 was sent for Bro. Hill.

1869.

In its 25th session the body met with Liberty West, Oct. and, to 4th, 1869. The sermon was by Skipper from 1 Cor. 6:17. The new ministers were Posey Olive,

newly ordained, J. W. Fulmer, and F. H. Moss. Olive is a good orderly, humble, and pious man. Fulmer is of excellent character, fair preaching ability, and for some years was pretty fully in the care of churches. Of late years he set us to avoid the care of churches, but preaches at will. He has a good farm for his support. Moss was a man of good advantages, and both served churches, and engaged at times in teaching. He was a useful man, a good preacher, and died at a good age, at Jackson's Gap, a few years since. One new church, County Line, Tallapoosa county, near the river, was added. Bro. Brewer declined a re-election as moderator, and Bright Skipper was elected, and Geo. E. Brewer clerk. J. M. Hart re-elected treasurer. The preaching was done by Spear, Moss, Brewer, Timmerman, Abbot and Figh. After the missionary sermon by Moss, a collection of \$31.84 for Domestic Missions followed. Correspondents were Abbot, S. Henderson, J. B. Land, and Harrison Land.

Elder Harlan appointed for circular letter, being absent, Bro. Moss was appointed to prepare one. It was not furnished, however.

After calling attention to the resolutions adopted last year, bearing upon the overture from the Home Mission Society, and stating that the convention had paid no regard to the request from this association, but had received with marked distinction Dr. Armitage from it, Bro. Brewer offered the following:

"Resolutions declaring a separation between the Central Association and the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Whereas, The Southern Baptist Convention in its late session at Macon, Ga., failed to rebuke the Home Mission Society, which had declared a purely political end as its especial objective point; and also failed to declare a non-fellowship with said society therefore; but, on the contrary, expressed warm fraternal regard for said body, and declared it to be "eminently proper" that Christian courtesies should be exchanged between the two bodies, thus recognizing, and even expressing that the two should be one, (therefore equal) and

"Whereas, By linking themselves with these large bodies, which are without Scriptural warrant, our churches are placed in an attitude where they become responsible for, and are, from contract, contaminated by false practices and doctrines of those over whom they can exercise no control, therefore, be it, *Resolved*,

Resolved by the Central Baptist Association, That we *hereby* forever sever our connection with the so called "Southern Baptist Convention"; and also with all bodies forming a constituent part thereof, or which are correspondents of the same so long as they maintain that character."

This brought up an earnest discussion. All were indignant at what was conceived to be a gross violation of Religious principles in Religious meetings, and a still worse insult, when in pretended restoration of a long broken fraternity, we should be asked to do the very thing that in the keenest instincts of self preservation the South was putting forth every effort to defeat. It was foreseen clearly that in every heavily populated portion by negroes, to raise them to all the duties of citizenship, was to strip ourselves of the right to rule our own affairs, and turn the power of government over into the hands of an ignorant race, who to do their best could but ruin themselves and us; and who were being led like sheep by the hand of a designing act, who proposed to clothe these uncultured people with civil power that they might more effectually subdue us than we then were. Civil power had been taken away from us, and a military despotism placed over us. Our conquerors by this means of enfranchising the former slaves, under northern manipulations of them, added to such

renegades as would adhere to those conquerors, for the leaves and fishes, they hoped to wrest all power from the hands of those who had so long successfully resisted their encroachments upon the constitutional rights of the States. In the end of the contest, we won at the ballot box, but a fraudulent government forced their policy upon us by flying in the face of the reconstruction laws, and against law, enfranchised the negro any way. For self preservation, a Pandora's box of frauds were inaugurated, the ill fruits of which are not yet all gathered.

Pending the discussion of the resolution it carried, by motion of I. W. Suttle, to postpone the further consideration until the afternoon session.

In the afternoon, after further discussion, on motion of I. W. Suttle, the preamble and resolutions were ordered spread upon the minutes, and a delegate from this body be sent to the next session of the Southern Baptist Convention to lay the whole matter before it; and after such steps have been taken, if the convention does not dissolve all connection with the Home Mission Society, then this association to stand entirely disconnected from the convention. Geo. Z. Brewer was elected as the delegate to the convention for the purpose indicated.

Upon motion of Bro. Moss the circular letter for the next session was to be omitted, and, in place of it, the committee on nominations were to designate two brethren, one to write a paper on duties of pastors to churches, and the other the duties of churches to pastors. F. M. Maxwell from committee on nominations appointed Moss for the first and Rains for the second. The pastors were requested to preach to their churches on ministerial support. There was a renewal of former recommendation in regard to the colored members of our churches. Suttle, Letcher, and A. T. Maxwell were appointed Executive Committee.

\$75.10 was sent up for Bro. Hill, and \$32.50 for Bro. Robt. Stewart.

A. G. Due from committee on Sunday Schools reported a growing interest in them, but great neglect prevailing among most of the churches. He asked for greater effort in this good work.

Upon the resolutions offered by Bro. Brewer, he went to the State Convention at Oxford, in November, and sought to commit the State Convention, but his proposition was voted down by a small majority, but received high commendations for his efforts even by those who voted against him. Their sympathies were with the movement, but feared it would awaken more persecution for the South. He was appointed a delegate from the State to the Southern Baptist Convention. At this convention he preached the convention sermon.

Baptized 158; letter 190; restored and voucher 34; dismissed 365; excluded 87; died 24; total 2310. Contributions \$211.80. Emigration West brought an actual reduction in membership, in spite of additions received.

1870.

The 26th session was held with Weydis church from Oct. 1st to 4th, 1870. Sermon by Moss, from 1 Cor. 3:9. The moderator being absent the body was called to order by Brewer, clerk. Suttle was made temporary moderator, and afterwards elected as such, Brewer clerk, Hart, treasurer. Bro. Burke, of Wetumpka, was the only new preacher. No new churches. The preaching was done by Colley, Fulmer, Brewer, Stedley, and Figh preached the missionary sermon. Collection \$2235. The only correspondent was T. B. Abbot. Upon the call for the essays requested of Brethren Rains and Moss, Rains said he had not had time to prepare such a one as he wished, and had therefore prepared none. Bro. Moss read a good paper which was published

with the minutes. Bro. Brewer reported that the Southern Baptist Convention declined to receive him as a delegate from the association as it had failed to contribute \$100.00 as required by the constitution. He stated that he asked the convention to be heard in behalf of the association simply upon the grievance arising from complication with the Home Mission Society. This was refused. He then as a delegate from the Alabama Convention, in his own right, offered a resolution dissenting from that part of the report of the visitors from the convention to the Home Mission Society, adopted at Macon, Ga., page 21 of the minutes of Southern Baptist Convention 1869, which accepted of the overture. He addressed the convention, upon the resolution, which called forth lengthy notices in the daily papers. But the resolutions were tabled. Subsequently A. M. Foadexter and S. H. Ford tried two or three times to take them from the table, but failed.

The matter was referred to the Executive Committee of the association to report upon. When their report was made, they quoted the full text of Brewer's resolutions of last year, and offered the following as a substitute for them: "That we do unanimously express our disapproval of the action of said convention, and that we earnestly recommend to all constituent parts of said Southern Baptist Convention a like course."

"Resolved further, That we do most solemnly protest against the spirit expressed by the report of the Home Mission Society, and regard it as furnishing sufficient reasons for a discontinuance of further correspondence with the said Home Mission Society, (for other body endorsing said spirit directly or indirectly.)" (The words embraced in the parenthesis were stricken out.)

"Resolved further, That we do most heartily endorse the position taken by our brother, Elder Geo. E. Brewer, and commend him for the zeal he has manifested in its defense."

The report was adopted and thus ended the matter. But it was many years before the convention had further correspondence with the "Society." Whether this episode led to the discontinuance or not, is not known.

\$61.90 was contributed for Bro. Hill, and \$38.50 for Bro. Stewart.

Baptized 99; letter 123; restored and voucher 19; dismissed 299; excluded 49; died 16; total 1884. Collections \$278.10. Emigration still depleting the body, and some churches going to other bodies also helped the loss.

1871.

Poplar Spring was the place for holding the 27th session, Oct. 1st to 3rd, 1871. The sermon was preached by Elder Colley from Acts 8:35. Suttle was elected moderator, and Moss clerk, D. J. Thompson treasurer. B. White and L. H. Haslie were the new preachers. Hastie afterwards became locally prominent in the ministry and association. He is perfectly original, and a natural wit. He has been moderator for many years. Brewer had removed from the association this year.

The preaching was done by Spear, Akin, Brewer, Skipper, Moss, and Timmerman. After the missionary sermon by Skipper a collection of \$51.85 was taken.

Brewer had been appointed the year before to write a circular letter upon the "Final Perseverance of the Saints." He responded in a clear argument, based upon 1. The Purpose of God to save. 2. The Predestination and foreknowledge of God in reference to the believer. 3. God does not forsake his people. 4. God keeps his people. 5. His people are sealed by the Holy Spirit.

The report on Sunday schools showed that many of the churches were yet without them.

The Executive Committee elected were, I. W. Suttle, A. T. Maxwell, J. A. Suttle, A. G. Dur, and A. J. Brooke. They were instructed to try and put an efficient missionary in the field. \$210.50 were pledged here for the purpose. Bro. E. White moved and it was carried to observe Friday before 5th Sabbath in this month as a day of fasting and prayer for more laborers.

Aquery had come from Mt. Olive church as to how one who had been a minister, and excluded from the church, but afterwards restored to the church, could be reinvested with his ministerial functions? It was answered that the restoring church, by so voting, could do it, or by courtesy might ask the presence of a Presbytery.

\$40.22 had been sent for Bro. Hill, and \$10.87 for Bro. Stewart. Hiram Haney, Henry Gilmer, and M. L. Fielder were appointed to investigate the reported misuse of funds sent to Bro. Stewart by Henry Meadows. Subsequently it was found he had appropriated some of the money for himself. It led to his exclusion.

F. M. Maxwell became practically standing chairman of "Finance Committee," for some years about this time, as Pylant had been for years before. Several men along these years came into prominence in the association, who were not mentioned in the list at an earlier period. There were G. M. Pinson, Ezeriah Pinson, D. M. Harris, A. W. Cooley, S. D. Hickman, the Gregorays of Liberty East, T. R. Pruitt, M. Upshaw, J. A. Robinson, Loflin, Elanegan, Bailey White, W. G. Payne, W. Connell, Willis Florence, A. J. Brooks, T. J. Hall, F. M. Allen, W. M. Hand, J. W. Walston, W. Cowart, Henry Gilmer, P. C. Edwards, G. W. Davis, W. P. Ward, J. J. Little, M. C. Thomas, T. J. Pennington, J. F. Edwards, R. Hand, J. A. Logan, O. C. Swindal, M. S. Bazemore, W. C. Brown, M. Hollingshead, J. W. Bailey, J. T. Nelson, J. Blankenship, J. W. Cooper, R. Looney, Josiah Callaway, N. J. Callaway, E. G. Brown, E. N. Little, T. Dorman, W. Conaway, W. J. Stone, J. P. Goggans, T. P. Christian, R. E. Conger, W. A. Harlan, M. Deloach, A. Hardy, B. T. Howle, J. F. Bowles, J. R. Wall, R. S. Fenton, David Wilbanks, E. J. Wommack, J. P. Ingraham, J. J. Grant, A. J. Deloach, R. C. Hardy, Richard Coffey, J. S. Bently, J. R. Conger, C. M. Moore, John Alexander, Wm. Eminger, M. L. Fielder, S. F. Thomas, M. B. Arant, L. M. Alman, W. T. King, D. S. Martin, J. L. Thompson, H. F. Barnes, Jas. Johnson, E. M. Devaughn, T. M. McCord, T. A. Kelley, W. J. Murphy, J. K. Barton and G. Allen. Baptized 129; letter 107; restored 21; dismissed 214; excluded 50; died 20; total 1930. Contributions \$178.20.

1872.

Shiloh entertained the association in its 28th session from Oct. 5 to 7, 1872. S. W. Spear preached the sermon from Jno. 17:14.

Petitionary letters were called for before the organization, when Tallassee from the Tuskegee, New Hope, and Antioch No. 2, newly constituted churches joined. This made Brewer again a member of the body as he belonged to Tallassee. Antioch No. 2, was near where Eclectic now stands. Eclectic has absorbed it. New Hope is about 11 miles South of Alexandria City. It has never been strong. There were too many churches crowded together in that region for any of them to do well. There were Mt. Zion, Liberty West, New Hope, and County Line in a few miles of each other.

I. W. Suttle was re-elected moderator, Geo. E. Brewer clerk, D. J. Thompson treasurer. The new minister was John C. White. He was a grandson of Cyrus

White, from whom the offshoot of the Baptists, called "Whiteites" took their name. Bro. White was a good preacher, and one of influence while he remained in the association.

The correspondents were Elders A. K. Trebble and Joel Simms, F. H. Voss, and Bret'ren Manning Ray, and Wm. Walker, a singer from S. C., and author of a music book as well as preacher. The preaching was done by Skipper, Brewer, Rains, Fulmer, Simms, Trebble and Walker. The missionary sermon by Rains, was followed by a \$20.80 collection.

On Monday morning Isaiah Holmes, who had gone off with the faction at Bethany, and had been restored, now appeared as a messenger from Macedonia, said he felt that he was due an acknowledgment to the whole body, and asked the privilege of making it. It was granted and he made an effective one.

The circular letter was read by the appointee J. A. Suttle, on the "Second coming of Christ."

There were no reports of interest from the committees. The Executive Committee reported that they had employed no missionary, as the funds at their command did not authorize them to get an efficient one, and any other would not meet the needs. They recommended the necessity of one.

The committee on deceased ministers noticed the death of old Bro. Hill, over one hundred years old, who died about the 1st of November, 1871. He was born in 1770. Came to Alabama in 1814. Was unable to preach after 1858.

The Executive Committee were J. A. Suttle, W. Suttle, A. J. Brooks, F. M. Maxwell, and J. F. Edwards.

Bro. S. Ray called the attention of the association to the exposed condition of the graves of Elders Benj. Wilson and Jos. Bankston, former moderator, and asked that a fund be raised to suitably enclose and mark them. Some \$24.00 was raised, which was subsequently added to, until the work was eventually done.

An additional amount was pledged to swell the mission funds of the association amounting to \$143.60.

Baptized 180; letter 141; restored and voucher 33; dismissed 206; excluded 27; died 16; total 2015. Contributions for Stewart \$47.00; for other purposes about \$100.00.

1873.

The 29th session was held with Bethesda church from Oct. 5th to 6th, 1873. The sermon was preached by T. C. Boykin, General Sunday School Evangelist for the State, from Neh. 2:17. It was a fine sermon.

Suttle and Brewer were re-elected moderator and clerk, and W. C. Brown, treasurer. Mt. Gilead, a new church, was received. Nothing particular is remembered of its history. Elder J. H. Thompson was the only new minister. He is a good man, of deep piety, but has never been very actively engaged in the ministry. He was a member of Bethlehem, in the southwestern part.

The correspondents were from Tallapoosa River, A. K. Trebble, D. Horn, J. W. Baker, From Liberty, Elder John Bledsoe, From Shelby, T. C. Boykin. This also represented the State Convention as General Sunday School Missionary. He was the first signs of awakening power on the part of the State Convention after the war, except that the Alabama Baptist was again dawning upon us. The development continued, until under T. M. Hailey, work was again brought into organic form, and Alabama has since, in some parts, been doing a good work in carrying out the Great

Lebanon church entertained the association in its thirtieth session from Oct. 3 to 5, 1874. Sermon by Skipper from Jno. 1:29. An hour had been spent in prayer by those who reached the place early. The effect seemed to pervade the entire meeting, for it was one of the most spiritual sessions ever held. Suttle and Brewer were elected, J. A. Robinson, treasurer.

The committees to report during the session were appointed as usual, and H. C. Taul moved to hereafter appoint as a standing committee one or more on missions.

Union church which had formerly dissolved, had reconstituted, and was received. New ministers S. W. Melton, T. B. Cooper, and C. F. Sturgis, Jr. None of these ministers remained long in the association, nor were they pastors, so did not enter largely into the history of the body. Sturgis was from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. His father was a scholarly man, and received the prize once offered for the best scriptural argument for slavery as held in the South. Cooper was a wise man just past the middle of life, and a good plain preacher.

The preaching was done by Norton, Cooper and Sturgis, White and Jas. L. Thompson, Taul, and Jones. The missionary sermon by Brewer from Rev. 20:6, produced a profound impression, and there was much weeping for joy at the Christian's hope as set forth. It was followed by a collection of \$38.35. Much of the benefits of the service were doubtless due to a precious prayer meeting preceding. During the intermission the stand was tendered the colored people, and Gilbert Crawford preached a good sermon with good effect. Sturgis and Skipper preached on Monday.

Norton, Baker and Horn, were the correspondents.

Jones Stephens was elected treasurer, but declined to serve, and then Robinson was elected.

I. W. Suttle read the circular letter upon the subject of missions as assigned at last session. It was a good letter.

The Executive Committee elected consisted of J. S. Bentley, J. D. Letcher, I. W. Suttle, D. J. Thompson, and P. C. Edwards.

The committee of last year reported that for want of funds, they had failed to employ any missionary. But a meeting of consultation had been held at Rockford, with a number of brethren from over the association, and they had asked Brethren Brewer, Rains, Taul, and Fulmer, each, with the consent of their churches, to give one month's service, in each of the four districts, one to each, during the leisure season, by way of stirring up the brethren in the churches therein. And asked the churches to give such compensation as they might voluntarily offer. This program had been carried out, and Brethren Brewer, Rains, and Taul made verbal reports of their work. Bro. Fulmer was not present. The reports gave good satisfaction to the body.

Pledges were taken for carrying on the work of missions, for some of the churches were without pastors, and had been for some years. These churches had neither Sunday schools, prayer meetings or other services. The members had lost interest, and it was rarely the churches came together for anything. Most of the others had meetings but once a month, and but few of them had Sunday schools. The depression from the fatal results of the war was beginning to give way, but the spirit of benevolence, and caring for the evangelization of others had largely died out during the decade of war and subjugation. The hearts of a few were imbued with the desire to arouse the indifferent, and to minister to the needy, as well as to give the gospel to those dwelling in darkness. Tallassee and Wetumpka were the

Commission. Boykin was very superior as a Sunday school man. Georgia afterwards took him from us for the same work, and of late years Texas has taken him from Georgia.

Skipper preached Saturday night, Bledsoe at 10 A. M., Brewer the missionary sermon at 11, Boykin addressed the body on his work in the afternoon, in an impressive way. Elder Normandy preached at night. The collection was \$41.65. The Missionary Sermon produced such an impression, that at the suggestion of Bro. Boykin, the association asked Bro. Brewer to prepare it and publish it with the minutes, and the minute fund was sufficiently increased to justify it. It was so published with the minutes of 1873.

H. C. Taul, pastor of the Wetumpka church, also became a member this year by reason of his connection with the church, but was not present. He remained some years in the body, and became right influential. He was a man of good family, fair education, and was above mediocrity in pulpit ability. He has buried himself in the mountains, and almost passed from public notice. He was once pastor of Adams Street Church, Montgomery.

Brethren Skipper and Rains, preached on Monday.

The Executive Committee consisted of J. S. Bentley, J. D. Letcher, I. W. Suttle, J. F. Edwards, and F. M. Maxwell.

A good report on Sunday schools was submitted by Colley, chairman of committee. The report closed with the recommendation of a committee of three in each district to work up a Sunday school interest therein, and report to next session. These committees were for the 1st, F. M. Maxwell, T. P. Christian, and Wm. McKinney. For and, J. H. Colley, I. D. Letcher, and H. Haney. For 3rd, S. W. Spear, Jones Stephens, and Henry Gliner. For 4th, J. S. Bentley, W. C. Brown, and J. W. Fulmer.

Bro. White from committee on deceased ministers made a fitting tribute to Elder Benj. H. Timmerman, who died Sept 22nd, 1873. He was not a man of what would be called good pulpit ability, but he was sound, and deeply spiritual. He was much more useful and influential than many of superior talent, because of his earnestness, humility, and readiness to do his best at any work asked of him by his brethren.

The Executive Committee had employed Elder Dornandy from about the 1st of March to the time of the session. He had labored faithfully, but lacked the talent and tact to do what was hoped for. No funds were on hand to continue the work longer.

Bro. S. Ray, reported that he enclosed in a stone tomb the grave of Elder Joseph Banks-on. Bro. Letcher reported that he had not finished that of Elder Wilson, and was granted further time.

One-half of Sunday's collection was paid to Bro. Boykin as evangelist, the remainder was given to F. W. Timmerman, for the use of the widow of B. H. Timmerman, who had been sorely bereaved in the death of three of the members of the family from typhoid fever, and the other three sick for a long time from the same, leaving her in a destitute condition.

Bro. Boykin said of Brewer's sermon that it was the most conclusive argument for the correctness of the position of the Baptists he had ever heard.

Baptisms 152; letter 159; restoration etc. 23; dismissed 195; excluded 35; died 17; total 2040. Contributions exclusive of salary to Elder Dornandy \$125.25. What was paid him does not appear in minutes.

only churches that had services all the time. The Manufacturing Co., at Tallahassee, supplemented what the church could raise for pastor with \$400.00, and this enabled them to keep a pastor for all his time. Bro. Brewer had held the position of pastor there from the time of the arrangement, in the winter of 1876. The pledges from individuals and churches amounted to \$99.50, and Tallahassee promised \$25.50, making a total of \$125.00.

The citizens of Alabama and of this association in common with them, now began to wear a more cheerful look; for the long reign of Federal power, and "scalawag rule," was broken. The old hero, Geo. Houston had been chosen governor, and the legislature was in the control of men who loved and had an interest in the State, and "Home Rule" was again inaugurated. From then things have been brightening. But the habit of doing but little had been formed. There were after this time but few progressive pastors, or they lacked the gift of leadership, so that the body has never since manifested the spirit which characterized the earlier years of her history. But improvement has begun again, and it is hoped before many years the association will rank as once before, with the most aggressive of the State.

Thirteen Sunday schools were reported by the committees appointed upon the subject last year. But they stated there was a large lack of interest.

Several papers were specially commended by the committee on periodicals, through Bro. Colley, chairman, especially the newly started "Alabama Baptist," "Index, Baptist, and Kind Words," with Home and Foreign Journal.

Bro. Lecher reported the grave of Bro. Wilson suitably enclosed. J. S. Bentley made a good report on Sunday schools. \$16.75 was raised for Bro. Stewart.

Bro. Jones Stephens from committee on deceased ministers, paid a high tribute to the worth of Elder S. W. Spear, who died in November 1873, triumphant in the faith of the gospel. He was a young and rapidly rising preacher. The influences of his early life were not favorable to Christianity, and especially to the Baptist faith. But through grace all these were overcome, and before manhood he joined at Concord, and adorned his profession.

The minutes close with the statement that the parting at this session was very tender, and that it had been one of the most harmonious and pleasant sessions ever held.

Baptisms 123; letter 128; restored etc. 20; dismissed 128; excluded 56; died 18; total 206. Contributions \$160.38 exclusive of pledges for next year.

1875.

The thirty-first session was held with Rockford church Oct. 2 to 4th, 1875. Sermon by R. M. Perry, of Coosa River Association. New church was Enon, Elmore county, and W. T. Larey and R. Barefield represented it. Bro. J. L. Thompson entered the list as an ordained minister. He had been a useful and exemplary member from boyhood, and was put forward in work early in life. Though still quite a young man he was now fully in the ranks as a preacher. Though not naturally brilliant, by dint of application he pressed his way through Howard and the Seminary, and has served to the good satisfaction of the brethren some of our strong churches. He is now pastor of the strong and growing church of West Montgomery. He is a good preacher, a wise pastor, and a pleasant genial companion, with whom his brethren love to associate.

Suttle and Brewer were re-elected moderator and clerk, and Robinson treasurer. Upon motion of Bro. Taul, Taul, Rains, and Fulmer were appointed to report on the

centennial movement. Those who preached were Colley, Horn, Taul, Wilkes, Henderson, Brewer, and Jas. Johnson.

The correspondents were Reems, Horn, Henderson, Wilkes, Perry, Cross and E. Conger.

The following is the report of the "Centennial Committee":

Whereas, We are entering upon the hundredth year of our national existence; and *Whereas*, This anniversary of civil liberty will be celebrated by the nation July 4th, 1876;

Resolved 1. That we hail with joy the approaching day that will make the hundredth year of God's goodness to us in giving us that degree of civil liberty that it has been our privilege to enjoy.

"2. That, while we would enter into this patriotic glee that thrills the hearts of the great mass of our people, and join heart and hand in commemorating the establishment of civil liberty on this continent by our noble ancestry, yet we feel called upon in more earnest tones to celebrate those nobler and higher achievements which have bequeathed to us perfect *Religious Liberty*.

"3. That, as religious liberty was, from the first, the trophy of the Baptists, and as our fathers, by their earnest devotion to the true principles of the gospel, and by their labors and sufferings, have, under God, been the instruments in establishing soul liberty in this commonwealth as it is enjoyed by no other people in the world, that their glorious deeds should be commemorated in some substantial manner in the coming Centennial year.

"4. That as our educational interests stand so closely connected with the interests of our Zion, we would turn the energies of all our brethren to establishing permanent means of educating our young men in a thorough manner, and on as easy terms as possible.

"5. That we heartily endorse the proposition of our brethren to raise an endowment for Howard College, and as an Association we pledge ourselves to do all we can for that purpose.

"6. That according to the plan suggested by the Central Centennial Committee, we adopt as our motto 'one dollar from every Baptist, and one dollar from every man, woman, and child under our influence,' and then we will solicit all to give as the Lord has prospered them.

"7. That we recommend the appointing of a committee consisting of a working quorum of five, located at Wetumpka, and one member from each church in our bounds, to arrange for canvassing of the churches for this purpose.

"8. That said committee be empowered, and are hereby directed to arrange for, and call a general Baptist gathering on the 4th of July next, to observe that day in its religious aspect.

"9. That said committee invite brethren to deliver addresses on that day on the subject of Religious Liberty and the Baptists."

This was ably discussed by Brethren Taul, Henderson, and Wilkes.

The committee required by the 7th resolution was made to consist of the working quorum of I. W. Suttle, H. C. Taul, J. Bates, Geo. F. Sedberry, and A. G. Due, at Wetumpka, and for the churches J. T. Edwards, J. N. Fincher, J. T. P. Christian, F. M. Maxwell, W. H. Harlan, J. D. Letcher, J. H. Colley, J. L. Thompson, M. Upshaw, B. T. Howle, C. E. Thompson, D. James, W. L. Williams, W. G. Wood, Geo. E. Brewer, F. S. Thomas, A. G. Rains, E. J. Wommack, T. W. Clark, G. P. Olive,

H. Gilmore, A. Terrell, W. J. Barrett, J. M. McCord, W. W. Maddox, J. R. Steeley, W. T. Larey, J. S. Bentley, D. J. Thompson, W. C. Brown, J. T. Nelson, H. Jones, A. M. White, W. B. J. Stone, and W. J. Stanley.

There was considerable effort made by some of those parties and like appointees in other associations of the State; and J. D. Renfro canvassed the State, devoting the year to the work, but nothing of permanent value in the way of money was accomplished. But little more than enough to pay the expenses of Renfro, and other expenses was secured. Now and then a good many of the members of a church would respond, but most did nothing. The names of all who gave the dollar was to have been enrolled on an honor scroll and preserved in the Institution. But the roll was short. It was thought by the originators, it would be no trouble to get a sum fully equal to and exceeding a dollar to every Baptist in the State, which would be a good start toward ending; and that many brethren who were able would give large sums, and so Howard would be placed on a solid foundation. But like many plausible schemes it miscarried, and a sense of failure—miserable failure was felt by those whose hearts had beaten with high hope. But Renfro became personally known almost everywhere, as he had before become known in reputation. The failure was not because he failed to do his part well, but because Howard has not been in the hearts of our people as it should be.

The circular letter prepared by J. S. Bentley was an earnest exhortation to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. 1. As to its teachings doctrinally and in ordinances. 2. In a new life, conformed in spirit as well as outwardly, to these teachings, as a life moulded after Christ's is more influential than the best presented theory. 3. Walking in the faith, avoiding entangling associations, with those who disregard and bring it into contempt, is the most successful contest we can make for it.

The committee on deceased ministers gave notice in a suitable report of the death of Elder Jas. M. Willis.

The reports on the various subjects usually reported upon brought out no points of special interest, except the Executive Committee through J. S. Bentley reported that they had called for two general meetings of consultation with as many brethren as they could get together to advise with the committee. The first was held in January, at Rockford, but the weather prevented a satisfactory attendance.

A second meeting was held in May, at Mt. Olive, when the attendance was better. It was there agreed to put Bro. J. H. Colley in the field to work as he might best judge his work would be needed, and Brethren Jas. L. Thompson and Jas. M. Johnson, were asked to preach as much as they could to pastorless churches, and such compensation would be paid them as the board could afford.

Colley's work had been blessed. He was engaged 66 days, had 27 additions, 20 by baptism. Had visited all the churches but two. He received \$120.00. Bro. Thompson had done a good work, preaching 80 sermons, receiving 31 additional baptisms. He had received \$114.00. Bro. Johnson had held two protracted meetings, from which 15 had been baptized. The amount of compensation received by him was \$20.00.

Baptized 126; letter 101; restored etc. 26; dismissed 196; excluded 39; total 2043. Contributions \$297.80.

Liberty East withdrew to join the Tallapoosa River Association. Bro. E. J. East left the Association, going to Opelika.

1876.

The 32nd session was held with Providence church from Sept. 30th, to Oct. and, 1876. The sermon was preached by Bro. Rains from 1st Cor. 6:19, 20. The clerk being absent J. I. Lamar, was requested to act temporarily. Suttle and Lamar were elected moderator and clerk, and Robinson treasurer. No additional churches. Bro. Catt Smith entered this year as an ordained minister. His early advantages were not good. But nature had done much for him, and he soon rose to considerable prominence which he sustains, and like Thompson, McCord, and Uphaw and Martin reached more than a mere local prominence. They take rank among those whose power is felt in the Convention. He was raised in the limits of the association.

C. H. Shelton represented the Alabama Baptist Elder John Jarrell from the Liberty. Those who preached were J. C. White, H. C. Taul, J. Jarrell, and A. A. Fluker. Taul preached the missionary sermon. Providence church obtained a letter to join the Carey. The committee on Sabbath schools asked the pastors in view of the benefits of such schools to become agents in trying to get them established in every church.

The committee on missions, through Taul, the chairman, made an earnest plea for more interest in missions, and larger contributions, especially to Foreign Missions.

Bro. Lamar, in reporting on periodicals, plead strongly for patronage to the Alabama Baptist, and said that the heads of families could easily spare enough of their produce to secure the paper, and the outlay would be a good investment. Money was raised to send the paper for a year to Bro. Robt. Stewart, and \$5.75 besides for his help.

Bentley from the Executive Committee, said all the work they had been able to secure, because of the want of means, was to induce Bro. Colly to labor in destitutions and pastorless churches about two months, and trust to the liberality of brethren among whom he labored, and the association for remuneration. That some others had likewise been conferred with, but had been prevented. Bro. Colley had been successful, baptizing 29 persons, besides performing many other profitable labors. The committee also bewailed the decline of correspondence among the churches, and a general spiritual decline. Pledges were then taken for the support of a missionary for the next year, which amounted to \$112.00.

The contributions of this session amounted to only \$115.95.

Baptized 71; letters 71; restored etc. 12; dismissed 137; excluded 20; dead 11; total 1738.

1877.

The 33rd session was held with Tallapoosa church from Oct. 6 to 8th, 1877. Sermon by H. C. Taul from Phil. 1:12, 28. Two churches, Bethany and Pine Grove, were received. Bethany was a small church near the Tallapoosa River below Tallassee. It was never large but a good working church. It now belongs to the Montgomery Association. Pine Grove never took a stand of prominence in the body. J. M. Johnson, T. A. Kelley, and J. M. McCord were the new ministers. These have all proven themselves good and useful men in the ministry, and are still working faithfully in the vineyard, with good success. Bro. McCord graduated from Howard College, and in a few years was called to good fields in other parts of the State. He is now in the Birmingham Association.

Suttle and Lamar were re-elected moderator and clerk, and T. J. Pennington,

and Jr., W. T. Davis, and J. R. Caldwell. This was the first visit of Bro. Bailey to the Association. He came as Financial Secretary of the State Mission Board, and his visit did much good here as elsewhere in arousing an interest in mission work. No man has done more or as much as Bro. Bailey in arousing the spirit of missions, and organizing for work at Missions, in Alabama. His work will live when he is dead. Could the State have had four or five such men to canvass it for a few years, the State would now be far in advance of its present position. He came to the Baptists from the Moravians, and did not leave that best feature of the Moravians behind him, but brought and linked it into the truths which drew him to the Baptist church. The Executive Committee consisted of J. C. Maxwell, J. B. Wilkerson, D. S. Martin, C. L. Walker, and H. Norrell.

The Alabama Baptist edited by Dr. E. F. Winkler, and J. L. West, was strongly urged for patronage upon the people by Bro. Bentley from Periodicals, also Kind Words.

Catt Smith from correspondence committee urged that the association do all in its power to encourage continued correspondence, that the association might have the benefit of the wise counsel of good brethren from other parts of the State. Holly Springs that had been dropped from the list for continued non-representation, sent a delegation this time and was restored again.

(Owing to some irregularity, a question was sprung by Union church as to the legality of the baptisms that had been administered at Sand Tuck at a successful meeting that had been held there by Elder J. M. Johnson, and referred to a committee of which J. M. McCord was chairman. Some irregularity was found to exist, but the association advised that there was not sufficient seriousness about it to cause any trouble. And advised the brethren to overlook it in view of the great good done and to love and cherish each other.

T. J. Pennington from Executive Committee reported that the funds on hand, and the dissatisfaction with the work done by the Executive Committee for the past few years prevented the committee from attempting any extensive work. The funds would not authorize the employment of a man or men of ability, and such only could meet the wants of the body. So they had contented themselves with securing such work as Bro. J. L. Thompson could give in school vacation, and some evangelistic work done by Bro. J. M. Johnson. The labors of these brethren had been much blessed. Bro. Wilkes, under employment of the State Board had also rendered some good service.

When the report of the committee on Missions was read, Elder Wilkes gave an account of his work as State Evangelist in this association. Bro. Bailey then explained his mission, and the object of the State Board. His address thrilled and stirred the body. A contribution in cash and pledges for \$193.50 for the State Mission Board was made; and \$97.75 for the support of J. L. Thompson at Howard College also, which added to the amount sent from the churches for the same purpose, secured his continuance at College.

The Committee reported the death this year of our afflicted Bro. Stewart who from paralysis had been unfitted for ministerial work. He was a brother beloved, that had been in the constitution of the association, and a preacher since 1848.

Coosa River church reported that Sim. Melton, though excluded still continued to preach, and asked what course to pursue. The body advised that he be advertised in the Alabama Baptist.

treasurer. Some new brethren were now coming to the front, among whom may be mentioned J. C. Maxwell, Wm. J. D. Upshaw, D. S. Martin, T. P. Moon, S. M. Sutcliffe, W. P. Dawson, and J. S. Turner, N. Hines, and J. W. Hussey. Six churches were not represented. The correspondents were Geo. E. Brewer, A. G. Simpson, H. H. Armstrong, T. J. May, J. Ragsdale, W. Wilkes, Jeff Falkner, J. R. Caldwell, J. W. Baker, J. Carrol, M. S. Glover, J. Evans, and F. Lowe.

The preaching was done by Caldwell, Catt Smith, J. M. McCord, Colley, W. Wilkes, Brewer, Faulkner, and J. M. Johnson. The missionary sermon was by Wilkes. Collection \$19.35.

The circular letter was a good one from T. J. Pennington on the "prerequisites to church membership."

Brewer asked for help for a house for the church at Alexander City, and secured \$7.50.

The report on missions from Bro. Taul, urged the association to try to have preaching at every church by helping the weak churches to secure pastors; to cooperate with the State Mission Board in the effort to evangelize the State; and to help in Foreign and Indian Missions.

They appointed T. J. Pennington, N. Hines, J. F. Edwards, R. S. Penton, and D. J. Thompson the Executive Committee. 236.50 was raised for the State evangelist.

The Executive Committee had employed for a time, in different parts of the association J. W. Fulmer, J. L. Thompson, J. M. Johnson, and J. M. McCord, and they were paid one dollar per day while at work. J. Steeley and J. R. Caldwell had also rendered some service, and were compensated likewise. There is no report of results of labor of any of them but McCord, 46 had been added through his labors.

Baptized 250; letter 102; restored etc. 38; dismissed 92; excluded 21; died 17; total 2025. Contributions about \$150.00.

1878.

Concord church had the 34 session with it from Oct. 5th to 7th, 1878. The sermon was preached by J. M. Johnson on Acts 9:6. Suttle, Lamar, and Pennington were re-elected Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer. The new churches were Alexander City from the Tallapoosa River Association, and the Coosa River church, newly constituted. Reference has been made before to Alexander City church, being composed largely in its organization by the absorption of old Elkatchie, the banner church of the Association. So the Alexander City church leads the way in progress now in the association. It is the only church having a parsonage. For the past two years it has paid nearly half the money reported in the financial column. The writer knows nothing of the Coosa River church.

Poplar Springs appeared with two sets of delegates, owing to a trouble that had split the church. The matter was referred to a committee of five whose duty it was to investigate the causes leading to the split, and report whether the minority or majority held the true principles of the church, and report accordingly. They reported in favor of the minority, and its delegates were seated.

Eloer G. B. Jenkins preached at night. A Sunday school mass meeting was held at 9 A. M. Sunday, and addressed by W. T. Davis, T. M. Bailey, and W. Wilkes. At 1 P. M., T. M. Bailey preached the Missionary sermon, and a collection of \$47.35 was raised. Wilkes and Taul preached in afternoon and night.

The Correspondents were T. M. Bailey, W. and J. L. Wilkes, G. B. Jenkins, Sr.

The circular letter was read by Taul, "On the duties of a deacon." It was a good paper.

Baptized 155; letter 99; restored etc. 42; dismissed 165; excluded 124; died 21; total 1988. Contributions about \$300.00. The large number of exclusions was owing to the split in Poplar Springs.

1879.

The 35th Session was held at Mt. Olive from Oct. 4 to 6, 1879. Sermon by Cant Smith from Jno. 16:13. Sand Tuck, and Mountain Spring, Talladega county, new churches were added. The new ministers added this year were J. M. McCord, W. J. Bone, J. Nelson, I. Holmes, O. C. Swindal, W. A. Ross, W. J. D. Upshaw. Of these the writer knows but little of Bone, Nelson, and Ross. Of Holmes mention has been made before. J. M. McCord soon worked his way through college by the help of the brethren, and has been a good exemplary, and useful minister. He did not continue long in the association. O. C. Swindal was advanced somewhat in life before entering the ministry. He has not given much time to the pastorate. His education is fairly good. He is a good and wise man. Though not fluent as a speaker, he is always sensible. He writes well. W. J. D. Upshaw is a man of clear head, great earnestness, of piety unfeigned, a warm hearted missionary, a good preacher and pastor. He has gone to Lineville where in it and surrounding churches he is doing a good work. The same officers were re-elected.

Those who preached were Caldwell, Cumble, Wilks, Brewer, and Hastie. Wilkes preached the missionary sermon and a collection of \$35.35 was taken.

Correspondents were H. S. Ham, W. H. Malone, W. Wilkes, J. D. Quizes, Geo. E. Brewer, R. A. J. Cumble, and J. R. Caldwell. Geo. E. Brewer in addition to representing Tuskegee association, also represented the State Board. Bro. Wilkes represented Coosa River, and was received also as State Evangelist in the Association. The Executive Committee elected, were W. C. Brown, D. J. Thompson, J. Bailey, R. Corley, and B. Caffee.

J. C. Maxwell was now for some years made chairman of Finance Committee. The report this year showed \$235.05 sent up to the association from the churches.

The time of meeting was changed to Friday before 1st Sabbath in October. The churches were asked to make up their funds at the churches so that all might participate, and not leave the fund raising to be done by the few who attended the meeting. They were also asked to give the names of the deceased members, so their names might be inserted in the minutes.

The Sabbath school report showed commendable progress, but several good schools known to exist had made no report. The churches were asked to make reports of their schools in their letters. A Sabbath school meeting was called for at Shiloh church, embracing the 5th Sabbath in November for the discussion of this subject, and a full attendance was asked for. Taul chairman.

Tallassee and Bethlehem were granted letters to join the Tallapoosa River Association.

The report on periodicals by H. Gilmer, recommended the Alabama Baptist, Christian Index, Baptist, and Religious Herald.

\$13.85 was made up, under the report upon missions, as an expression of appreciation of Bro. Wilkes' labors, and appropriated to his wife, Sister M. E. Wilkes. \$80.05 was also raised to aid Bro. McCord to attend Howard College. Bro. Brewer presented the work of the State Board, and raised for it \$94.00. Bro. Cumble raised \$10.00 to assist Alexander City church.

Bro. Maxwell, J. C., from Executive Committee, reported that the funds in their hands did not authorize them to try to employ a regular mission try. But they contacted with Brethren Thompson and McCord to send their vacation at work in the association, and for the days they labored in destitutions they would pay them \$1.00 per day. These brethren accepted, and so worked, except when assisting pastors. These brethren reported 43 days employed, for which they had been paid as per contract. The churches were urged to better contributions.

The committee on deceased ministers paid a fitting tribute to Bro. Chas. Gregory, who died March 28th, 1879, in his 88th year, having been born in 1791. He came to Alabama about the time of the removal of the Indians, and was soon baptized by Elder John Humphries, at Sardis church, Chambers county, Ala. He was soon made a deacon, and not long after licensed to preach, but would not consent to ordination. It is said of him, "that such was his integrity, deep piety, and familiarity with the Word of God, that he carried an unusual weight of influence. He was a living epistle, known and read of all men. He fully carried out the injunction, diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." The writer can fully aver to the truthfulness of these statements, for he knew him well for many years. He was always liberal in his contributions, and especially to Indian Missions. The war took away his negro property, but, undaunted, he went to the field, and up to almost the time of his death, he worked like a man in the prime of life, and God gave him strength and success. His home was a home for his brethren, for he was given to hospitality. Such men are rare, like comets in the sky.

Baptized 151; letter 118; restored etc. 28; dismissed 149; excluded 67; dead 19; total 2091.

1880.

Alexander City church entertained the association in its 30th session, from Oct. 1st to 4th, 1880. The sermon was by L. H. Hastie from Is. 54:17. Friendship, Coosa county, a newly constituted church joined. No new ministers.

Suttle, Lamar and Pennington were re-elected.

The correspondents were J. F. Bledsoe, Brewer, Cumble, J. P. Shaffer, J. A. Corley, B. Vines, W. D. Bulger, W. H. Faine, O. P. O'Brien, J. L. Watts, Caldwell, J. C. White, J. M. Berry, W. L. Banks, and J. Upshaw. Brewer was received as the representative of the State Board, and Bledsoe of that of the Foreign Board.

The M. E. Church, tendered the use of their house. Elder Bledsoe preached in the Baptist church at night, and J. M. Johnson at the M. E. Church.

The report on missions the minutes say "called forth highly interesting and encouraging speeches from Elders Brewer, Bledsoe, Shaffer, Smith and Cumble." The report as made by J. M. Johnson, recommended the adoption of the plan of work as proposed by the last session of the State Convention, held in Greenville. They also recommended the Executive Committee to employ an efficient missionary to work in the bounds of the association, and furnish him with suitable literature for colportage work. And that the funds that may be collected or sent up be devoted to this work.

The circular letter prepared by J. L. Thompson was read. It was a good paper upon the benefits of Christian co-operation.

Elder Cant Smith made the report on Sunday Schools and it was still the complaint of neglect on the part of many of the churches.

H. C. Taul was to preach at the Baptist church tonight, Saturday the 2nd, Cumble at 10 A. M., Shaffer at 11:30 A. M., at the M. E. Church, Caldwell at 10 A. M.,

Brewer at 11.30 A. M., a collection was taken, to purchase a Cyclopaedia for Carr Smith amounting to \$104.

The committee on Periodicals, through Pennington, recommend highly the benefits of religious periodicals in families, and urged for patronage the same papers as last year, with the addition of the Home and Foreign Journal, and Kind Words.

The Executive Committee elected were J. C. Maxwell, R. S. Penton, H. Norrell, W. H. Jones, and J. L. Thompson. The former committee reported that having reservation to add to what might be raised this time, hoping thus to have enough to work effectively the following year.

The churches were then called upon to know what they would try to raise for the work during the year, and cash and pledges amounting to \$216.05 was raised. \$77.25 was also raised to aid J. M. McCord through college. Nine churches reported Sunday schools.

Baptisms 191; letter 96; restored etc., 39; dismissed 104; excluded 41; died 15; total 2149. Total contribution and pledges \$517.05.

CHAPTER VI.

(PROSPECTS BRIGHTENING.)

1881.

The 37th, gathering of the body took place at Antioch No. 2 and lasted from Oct. 1st, to 3rd, 1881. J. L. Thompson preached the sermon from 1 Pet. 1:34. H. H. Colly was elected moderator, Lamar clerk, and Pennington, Treasurer. Among those who for a few years became active members of the body may be mentioned, in addition to those already given J. L. Austin, R. W. Cunningham, T. L. Austin, J. A. R. Baxley, J. F. Patterson, M. J. Dozier, R. M. Murchison, J. H. Hickman, J. B. Wilkerson, E. J. Bryant, B. F. Harris, E. Cason, M. L. Welch, H. B. Young, W. M. Emfinger, J. Wideman, W. J. Johnson, W. J. Edwards and D. W. McCoy. The correspondents were W. G. Worrell, J. F. Bailey, and from the Morning Star Association (colored) G. W. Jeter and W. J. Holmes.

The preaching was by Steeley, Taul, McCord, T. A. Kelley, and J. M. Johnson. After the missionary sermon by Taul \$21.75 was collected.

The Executive Committee was J. C. Maxwell, R. S. Penton, H. Norrell, J. F. Lancaster, and R. M. Cunningham.

Elder Taul made the report on Missions, from which is extracted the following expressions: "The churches of our Lord Jesus Christ certainly must have some higher, grander work to perform than merely maintain their organizations—to hold the land already occupied. The whole spirit of the New Testament indicates that these churches are here for the purpose of making conquests of other lands, of spreading far and wide the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ. The practical question for us to consider is, what part of this great Christian Enterprise are we to perform? While God is preparing his people for the second coming of His Son, will we not undertake to do our part? Co-operation with the Baptist State Convention in efforts to evangelize the world was urged, and especially the colportage work.

The deacons were asked to press the claim for missions in the churches, \$243.50 was pledged.

Maxwell, from the Executive Committee showed that Bro. Smith had been employed for six months at a salary of \$300, to preach as missionary and act as Colporteur. That he had rendered efficient service, except that sickness had deprived him of two months of the time. He had been paid \$126.20, the balance was due. He had traveled 1373 miles, visits 155, preached 75 sermons, organized to Sunday schools, visited 35 churches, and 15 destitute places. Had ordained two deacons; sold \$600.00 worth of books and gave away \$40.00 worth.

The committee on Sunday schools, through Carr Smith, said if the churches would get the real benefit of such schools, they must have, 1st A leader; and Teach Baptist principles; 3rd Attend regularly, and use American Baptist Publication Society Literature.

The committees on Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Sabbath Schools, State of Religion, Temperance, and Religious Literature were appointed to report next year, so they might have more time for their work. \$21.15 was raised toward getting a library for J. M. Johnson; and \$26.65 to help Bro. Steeley to procure a horse.

Bro. Suttle, who was to write the circular letter, having within a short time lost many of his family, out of the sadness of his heart wrote principally upon the comfort to be derived from meditation upon the love of God toward us, and the need for resignation to God's will.

Baptized 110; letter 77; restored etc. 32; dismissed 105; excluded 64; died 28; total 2121. Contributions \$266.95.

1882.

The session for 1882 was held with Sardis church, from Sept. 30th to Oct. 2. Sermon by W. J. D. Upshaw from Matt. 9:37-38. Bethlehem returned from the Tallapoosa River Association. This year D. S. Martin was added to the ministry. He has made fine improvement on his early opportunities. He is a man of naturally lovable qualities, sweet spirited, humble, but firm and true to his convictions, all these mellowed and improved by grace reigning within, makes him one of the most useful of the association. He is a sweet singer, and a good clerk of the association.

Colley was re-elected moderator, J. C. Maxwell clerk, and T. J. Pennington, treasurer. The preaching was done by B. H. Vickers, J. H. Norton, Carr Smith, J. L. Thompson, and D. S. Martin, F. McCloud, and J. Smith preached the missionary sermon. Collection \$27.00.

Correspondents, J. F. McLeod, J. H. Norton, and G. W. Jeter, (colored.) Executive Committee, J. F. Edwards, D. J. Thompson, Henry Norrell, F. M. Maxwell, and D. M. Harris

Taul read the report on Foreign Missions, but gave no figures, merely told of the nations being open for the gospel, and urging the body to aid in the work.

The report on Home Missions, made by Bro. Upshaw, was spoken to by Brethren Thompson and Smith.

The Executive Committee, through Bro. Maxwell, reported that the two month's service due from Bro. Smith on last year's contract had been rendered. That Bro. D. S. Martin had been employed to preach to the destitutions in the eastern part of the association, but without any stipulated salary. The work had been well done, and liberal compensation was recommended. He was paid \$100.00. After an ad-

work done. The report and recommendation were adopted. Bro. Steele was paid \$50.00, and Martin \$12.00. The committee of conference with State Board was J. S. Bentley, J. B. Wilkerson, and T. P. Cranford. 12 churches reported Sunday schools.

Several prominent brethren, much loved by the association died this year viz: M. Upshaw, A. W. Colley, Henry Gilmer, W. T. King, and T. L. Austin.

Bro. W. J. D. Upshaw read the circular letter upon the subject of Ministerial Education.

Baptized 136; letter 136; restored etc. 21; dismissed 96; excluded 35; died 23; total 1857. Contributions \$298.25. Foreign Missions received but little.

1884.

The 40th session was held with Shiloh church Oct. 4th, 1884. The sermon was by D. S. Martin from 1 Cor. 10:12. J. M. McCord preached in afternoon. Union and Sand Tuck returned from the Montgomery; and Iteulah of Elmore, a new constitution, joined. G. M. Lowery was added to the ministry. Colley, Martin, and Pennington were re-elected.

The correspondents were Cumble, W. L. Banks, M. J. Banks, W. D. Bulger, D. J. Thompson, H. Ingram.

The preaching was done by Cumble, Smith, Hastie, Kelly, and Vickers. Smith preached the missionary sermon, and a collection was taken to raise a Colportage Fund, which was finally completed, and called the I. W. Suttle Fund, amounting to \$100.

Correspondence was again opened, and from the colored association appeared Green Jeter, Jas. Baker, and Levi Whitaker.

A resolution offered by Bro. Upshaw was adopted unanimously, asking any community in which the association may hereafter meet, not to allow the sale of drinks of any kind upon the grounds while the body is in session. Pending the report on Foreign Missions a collection was taken for it amounting to \$24.00. The report was made by J. C. Maxwell, in which for the first time in a long while, there had been brought out any facts in regard to the work being done. They had been mere essays upon the obligation to the work. They were good as such, but did not appeal to the business sense of the brethren. This report did, as well as to their hearts, and hence the collection. The association was asked by the State Board for \$92.55 for both the Foreign and Home Boards.

Bro. Catt Smith made a real report upon the work of the Home Board as Maxwell had upon the Foreign.

Bro. Upshaw from State of Religion reported that the news generally indicated a gracious favoring of Zion, and moving forward in mission lines, but that in our own association the prospects were not so good.

Bro. Smith also submitted a real report on State Missions, and urged the effort being made to try to raise the \$222 asked of the association for State Work.

The Central Committee gave a despondent report. Seemed to think the spirit of Anti-mission prevailed to considerable extent from the failure of response on part of most of the churches. They had simply continued Bro. J. M. Johnson with the indefinite plan before pursued. They seemed ready to despair of doing anything on former plans. They now asked the Committee on Nominations to be authorized to nominate a Missionary for the association, and then the body to reject him unless they intend to sustain him suitably. If they vote approval they ask the members of the churches to secure a pledge from their churches at the first meeting as to what

dress by Bro. Smith upon the subject, there were taken pledges and cash for associational work for the ensuing year, \$172.00.

The report on Sunday schools from J. L. Thompson, showed progress in the work, and that opposition to it was giving way. He insisted that the view taken by some that the work was separate from church work was wrong. It was urged that our peculiar views should be taught in our schools. Thompson and Upshaw spoke to the report.

A good report was made by Smith on Religious Literature.

Wetumpka, Enon, Sand Tuck, Union, and Bethany asked for letters to go into the constitution of the Montgomery Association. Union and Wetumpka asked to retain their mission fund, but the request was refused, as obligations had been incurred based upon it.

The Committee on Temperance urged the churches to a higher standard, and to regard regular tipping as a disqualification for membership; or to aid in making or selling it, or to sign petitions for its sale equally so.

\$13.85 was raised to help build at Mt. Zion, Eclectic, and Friendship. Two brethren who had long been prominent in public life and the association, died this year, A. G. Due of Wetumpka, and A. H. Kendrick of Nixburg.

Ten Sunday schools were reported.

Baptized 117; letter 99; restored etc. 23; dismissed 133; excluded 43; died 23; total 2201. Contributions about \$250.00.

1885.

The 39th meeting took place with Macedonia church Oct. 6th, 1885. Catt Smith preached the sermon from Jno. 18:36. Goodwater church joined, bearing a letter from the Carey. This church is in the town of the same name. It has some most excellent members, but has not accomplished as a church what its opportunities made possible easily. B. H. Vickers this year passed into the rank of an ordained minister. The election resulted in Colley Moderator, D. S. Martin clerk, and T. J. Pennington Treasurer.

The correspondents were brethren Cumble, Wilkes, Ingram, Glass, D. J. Thompson, and Benj. Calloway. Bro. T. P. Cranford, B. W. Young, D. F. Avant, and J. J. Garrett, N. J. Calloway, G. M. Lowery, W. R. Miller, D. F. Jacks, R. C. Hardy, A. B. Duke, J. F. Bone, and O. P. Looney, J. R. Funderberk for a few years were frequently present, and gave strength to the body by their influence.

Preaching was done by Cumble, Wilkes, Upshaw, and L. H. Hastie. Cumble preached the missionary sermon. The collection was \$75.10, mostly for Mrs. Watts.

Several of the reports presented nothing out of the usual line. The Temperance report drew speeches from Brethren W. and J. Wilkes, R. B. Pruett, and I. W. Suttle. This was followed by a resolution declaring the purpose of favoring strictly temperance men for places of trust; and appointment of a committee to petition the Legislature to grant the Judge of Probate power to order an election to prohibit the manufacture and sale of intoxicants. The committee was R. B. Pruett, Catt Smith, and T. J. Pennington.

The Executive Committee, through J. F. Edwards, reported that they had authorized D. S. Martin to work in the Southeast part as he had opportunity, and Steele in the Northwest likewise, without stipulated salary. Their work had been satisfactory. They recommend dispensing with the Executive Committee, and the appointment of a committee of three to co-operate with the State Board in the

the church will do, and to report the action to the Central Committee by November so the Committee may know how to proceed. A motion then prevailed that J. S. Bently, J. C. Maxwell, and W. P. Ward be added to the Committee on nominations. Bently, Pennington, and Norrell were made the Central Committee, and L. H. Hastie was nominated as Missionary Colporteur.

By motion, a page of the Minutes was to be left as a memorial page to the memory of Deacon I. W. Suttle, who died June 6th, 1884. This ended the life of one who perhaps did more for the association, all things considered, than any other member.

A special committee consisting of J. S. Bently, F. M. Maxwell, Robert Christian, W. B. J. Stone, and W. P. Ward, was appointed to fix the salary of Bro. Hastie. When their report came up they recommended \$50.00 per month; commended him to State Board, and pledged the board to sustain it in maintaining him in the Association as missionary and colporteur, except two days in each month to be given Macedonia church as pastor.

It was resolved to hold a meeting of the Central Committee at Rockford on Saturday before the 4th Sabbath in October, and that Secretary T. M. Bailey, and Bro. Hastie, with any others wishing to do so be asked to meet with them.

A good paper was read from the committee on Sunday schools, in which the subject is well discussed. They show that the number of schools is increasing, but many of the churches are without schools still. The report is signed by R. B. Smith, T. A. Kelley, and J. S. Bently.

Bro. Johnson had labored 35 days successfully, and it was agreed to pay him at the rate agreed upon for Bro. Hastie.

It was agreed upon motion of W. P. Ward, that the association meet on Wednesday before the 1st Sabbath of October next year. This has since been the time of meeting.

The circular letter took a new form, being from the messengers of the churches and pastors to the brethren at home, and was signed by moderator and clerk. It urged a falling into line harmoniously with the boards of the Southern Baptist Convention and that of the State; and a more general and liberal sustenance to them.

Five useful and good men had fallen by the hand of death this year, John Welch, L. M. DeLoach, Stephen Jackson, Thos. McDonald, and I. W. Suttle.

There were baptized 100; letter 70; restored etc. 19; dismissed 77; excluded 54; died 21; total 2129. Contributions \$251.15. Of this amount \$37.55 was for foreign missions, the largest amount given in a long while for this cause, if not the largest to date.

1885.

The session for 1885, the 51st, was held with Antioch church, Sept. 30 to Oct. 2nd, and sermon by I. M. Johnson from Is. 52:13. There were no new churches. W. T. Stewman, and J. H. Taylor were added to the ministry. L. H. Hastie was elected moderator, and Martin and Pennington re-elected.

The correspondents were T. M. Bailey, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer. State board, Geo. F. Brewer from Liberty, and Green Peter from Morning Star. Brethren Wm. Upshaw and Carr Smith were to preach to-night at the church, and Grange.

A committee of seven, with the moderator as chairman, was appointed to visit Mountain Springs during the year, and report the result of their labors at the next

session. The committee was Hastie, Lowery, Looney, Stone, A. J. Smith, Blockers and M. E. Stone. J. W. Ledbetter was here for the first time, but he was afterward one of the working members of the body. J. A. Harden had also been a useful man that has not been mentioned before.

At 11 o'clock the second day the body adjourned to hear a sermon from Bro. Brewer, which was favorably noticed in the minutes. He followed it with an appeal for Foreign Missions and took a collection of \$26.40.

Good reports on State Missions by J. S. Bently and J. L. Jones; Home Missions by Upshaw; Foreign Missions by D. S. Martin were read, and discussed by Bro. Bailey in a thrilling speech, at the close of which he called for pledges and secured \$520.00.

On Friday morning the report on Sabbath schools was made by Bro. Kelley, and the one on temperance by B. H. Vickers. This was emphasized by an impressive speech from Bro. Upshaw. The committee on the State of Religion gave the most cheering report that had been made for years. It spoke of gracious revivals, repaired houses of worship, increased interest in, and a larger number of Sunday schools. This was signed by Hastie, Looney, and W. B. J. Stone.

Pennington made a good report on Religious Literature, which was followed by speeches from Brethren Brewer and Bailey, and 28 new subscribers were obtained for Alabama Baptist. At 11 o'clock the body adjourned to hear a soul stirring sermon from Bro. Bailey.

A committee consisting of Bently, Jas. Walker, Smith, Bailey, and Pennington, was appointed to examine the report of Bro. Hastie. They reported he had done eight month's work, and was entitled to \$400.00 of the State Mission Funds.

J. M. Johnson took a collection of \$10.00 to complete the I. W. Suttle Fund, which, with the profits in Hastie's hands made up the full \$100. The same Central Committee was elected.

Alexander Logan another old and useful member died this year. This session was the best and most soul inspiring all things considered since the war. And could the impulse then given have been continued, the body would now be where she might rank, among the best in the State.

Baptized 123; by letter 80; restored etc. 19; dismissed 99; excluded 65; died 23; total 2131. Contributions about \$400.

1886.

The 52nd session was held with wayside church from Sept. 19th, to Oct. 1st, 1886. Sermon by W. T. Stewman from Jno. 20:27 J. D. Hughes was a new minister added to the list. Though without the advantages of education, God has greatly blessed his labors among the churches. Hastie, Martin, and Pennington were re-elected.

The correspondents were from the Liberty, Brewer, Bledsoe, and J. F. Moss. Weogufka, Elias Kelley. Coosa River, J. D. Renfro. Tallapoosa River, J. H. Norton, W. B. Crumpton Corresponding Secretary of State Mission Board. Renfro represented the Alabama Baptist, of which he was editor. Our esteemed old brother and fellow laborer of the past, Jas. M. Russell of Texas was also present for the first time in 20 years.

Bro. Crumpton preached at night. After appointment of Committees the association adjourned until Thursday morning. A half hour was pleasantly spent in devotional exercises led by Bro. Norton. The reports from the several Committees

on Missions were read and adopted. Pending the motion to adopt a telling speech was made by Bro. Crumpton.

At 11 A. M., the body adjourned to hear one of Renfro's fine sermons from 1 Pet. 2:5.

The Central Committee in the afternoon session reported, stating that the removal of Bro. Bailey, Corresponding Secretary from Alabama had deterred business, and this disaster added to prevailing floods had deterred them from undertaking any work. But as the way was now open they proposed to unite with the East Liberty in the employment of Elder J. F. Bledsoe as Joint Missionary Colporteur for the two associations, each to take half his time, and work under the State Board. This arrangement was consummated very satisfactorily to the associations and State Board. He was reported the most efficient man in the State at the work.

Bro. Green Jeter was received from the Morning Star association. And correspondence returned to it.

The reports on missions was further discussed by Brethren Brewer and Russell. Pledges to the amount of \$255 were taken. A balance of more than \$100 was still in Treasurer's hands.

The third day Bro. Hughes preached in the morning at the house. Bro. Brewer presented earnestly the claims of Foreign Missions, and secured the promise from nine of the pastors present to take a collection for it at their first meeting with their churches, and forward to the Board.

The report on Sunday schools by J. L. Jones, was adopted after being discussed by B. H. Young, Brewer, and Hastie.

That on Temperance by Catt Smith was discussed by Jas. Russell and Geo. W. Harrington.

At 11 the body adjourned to listen to a sermon from our old father in the gospel, Jas. M. Russell. After the sermon, the body collected \$29.55 for him as some expression of appreciation for him.

J. H. Colley and C. M. Moore reported the State of Religion as equal to it not better than the year before.

W. P. Ward from Religious Literature made a strong appeal for Alabama Baptists, especially since it is now conducted by Bro. Renfro. He secured a good list of subscribers.

Cranford, Corley and Cooper from Finance Committee showed that the contributions were reasonably good.

The Central Committee was Pennington, J. C. Maxwell, Cranford, and Bentley. Bro. Ed. Gandy took a collection for a house at Mt. Moriah, amounting to \$17.35.

The committees to report at next session were appointed, and the body adjourned after another pleasant session. One brother who had long been with the body, E. M. Devaughn, died this year. Two most excellent sisters had also been called home, Sisters P. Y. Thomas and Emily P. Gary. The latter was one of the true mothers in our Israel, the kindest of friends to all, especially to the sick and poor. She was the incarnation of an ideal woman.

Bro. Upshaw wrote a good circular letter on the "Relative duties of Pastors and Churches."

Baptized 205; letter 92; restored and vouchers 48; dismissed 120; excluded 54; died 24; total 2237. Contributions about \$330.

1887.

The 43rd session was held at Union Springs Sept. 28 to 30th, 1887. J. F. Bled-

soe preached the sermon from Eph. 4:3 and 13. Catt Smith was the appointee, but was absent. The minutes say the sermon was edifying. No new churches. Elder R. A. J. Cumbee this year was added to the ministry by becoming a member of Alexander City church. He had been with the association so much of late years that he was already at home. He had done much in building up the churches at Alexander City and Goodwater. He is a great revivalist, and has baptized more people, perhaps, in East Alabama than any other one.

The same officers were re-elected by acclamation. The correspondents were Ham, Steele, Bledsoe, and G. A. G. Morris. The rule was suspended and the constitution so amended as to make ministers ex-officio members.

From the minutes of this year it appears that the treasurer received for and paid to Bro. Russell \$124.25. And the collections arranged for amounted in the aggregate for the past year to \$448.60. The committees were appointed, and the body adjourned until Thursday.

The report on State Missions was by Upshaw, who urged the association to respond promptly to the call of the Board as it would not be more than an average of 25 cents to each member. He wished the body to join the march forward that was going on in the State. 56 missionaries and colporters were employed. The committee on Home Missions had prepared no report. J. S. Bentley presented a good paper on Foreign Missions. The figures showing the work done did not appear in the report. The reports were discussed by Bledsoe, Stewman, Upshaw, and Cumbee; and the cash and pledges for the work amounted to \$276.45.

At 11 A. M., the body adjourned to hear Bro. Cumbee preach.

The report on Sabbath schools by R. B. Pruett was spoken of during the evening, and again on the next day by Bledsoe, Harrington, Maxwell, and Martin. It showed progress in Sunday school work.

The report on Temperance by Pennington was spoken to by Brethren Cumbee, Culpepper, Stewman, Harrington, Hughes, Martin, Looney, Kelley, Grant, Upshaw, and others.

Mt. Moriah was granted a letter to join the Weogufka Association.

The Central Committee reported the arrangement as having been consummated by which Bro. Bledsoe had acted as joint missionary colporteur for this and the Liberty Association. His work had been highly satisfactory. It would be continued for the year to come. He had traveled 1203 miles; preached 53 sermons; delivered 15 addresses; sold books to the value of \$201.37; and had given 123 days service.

The Finance Committee reported receipts of \$344.85, Foreign Missions received of this amount \$38.05.

The Central Committee was J. S. Bentley, J. C. Maxwell, Pennington and Cranford.

Baptized 118; letter 69; restored 21; dismissed 117; excluded 33; total 2371. Elder Bledsoe died suddenly before leaving the neighborhood. A good and useful man was lost to the denomination.

1888.

The 44th session was with Goodwater, Oct. 3rd to 5th, 1888. Sermon by Hastie, 2 Pet. 3:18. Neither new churches or ministers. There was a re-election of the same officers.

C. S. Johnson preached at night.

The correspondents were Brewer, Barber, C. S. Johnson, Conger N. E. & J. R., M. M. Driver, W. R. Whatley, D. J. Thompson, J. P. Shaffer, Thos. B. Fargison, J.

ters. Bro. Johnson has devoted himself partly to teaching, but serving churches in connection. He is educated, a good educator, extensively read, and a good speaker. Bro. Whatley was first a lawyer, but abandoned the profession and a good practice in obedience to his convictions. He is studious, and successful; and noted for piety, and devotion to his convictions. Bro. Swindal has not had good educational advantages, but is full of zeal and consecration, which combined with his natural advantages gives him useful strength.

The former officers were re-elected. The committees to report during the session were appointed; and the committee on preaching reported partially, and the body adjourned until Thursday, 3rd. Geo. Gregory was to preach at night at Eclectic, and E. F. Babler at the church.

The devotional exercises of the morning were conducted by W. R. Ivey. The correspondents were numerous, and from the Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, Tuskegee, Coosa River, Tallapoosa River and Morning Star associations.

The ministers among them, were Roby, Fargason, Ivey, Brewer, J. L. Thompson, Babler, Steele, Gregory, Vickers, Horn, G. M. Harrington, and Green Jeter colored. J. G. Harris represented the Ministerial Board.

At 11 A. M. the body adjourned for preaching by Bro. Brewer.

In the afternoon the report on Missions was called for, when Bro. Upshaw read a good report on State Missions. There being no report for the Home or Foreign Boards, Bro. Brewer was requested to read some extracts from the State Mission Board Annual. Pending the motion to adopt, Bro. Harris being compelled to leave, business was suspended to enable him to talk upon Ministerial Education. He was followed by Brethren Ivey, Roby, and Thompson. A resolution was adopted declaring the hearty sympathy of the body with education—both ministerial and secular.

Brethren appointed to preach at different times and places were Thompson, Pruitt, Hughes, Swindal, and Hastie.

Friday morning the first thing done, upon the suggestion of Bro. Roby, \$50.00 of Home Mission fund was donated to Havana house. Bro. F. C. Plaister was reported as laboring successfully among the colored preachers.

The discussion of Missions was resumed, when addresses were made by Babler, Ivey, Johnson, and Roby. The report was adopted. Pledges were taken for the ensuing year, when \$433.50 in cash and pledges were raised.

Bro. Lett proposed to raise funds to send Bro. A. C. Swindal to Howard College; and \$133 was raised. \$10 was raised for Bro. Stealy, and \$12.75 for Bro. J. H. Norton's widow.

The report of the Central Committee showed that Bro. Fargason had put in a good year's work, and had well earned his stipulated wages, as well as the gratitude of the brethren for his work. He had given 330 days service in the two associations. He had traveled 2464 miles. Had preached 85 sermons, besides addresses and much other work. 22 had united with the churches in connection with his labors. He had sold books to the value of \$569.65.

The committee on Finance in its report made by Geo. W. Davis showed \$413.73, besides amounts collected in the body. The report showed that Foreign Missions was getting more on the hearts of the body. The amount given for it being \$92.87, more than ever before.

The same Executive Committee was continued.

P. Hunter, G. L. Bell, C. H. Gilliland, J. R. Steele, C. Smith, W. Wilkes, J. M. Fluker, C. W. Hare, G. B. Jeter (colored) and Sol Marberry (colored.)

At 11 A. M., the body adjourned to hear a sermon from Brewer.

The reports upon the different Missions were read. On state by Cumbie; Home, by Upshaw; and Foreign, by C. M. Moore. These were discussed by Babler, Shaffer, Smith, Brewer, Fargason, Hare, Upshaw and others, and then adopted.

At night Bro. Shaffer, Financial Secretary of Howard College, addressed the body in the interest of that Institution, and raised in cash and pledges for it \$79.85.

J. S. Bentley read a good report on Religious Literature, and Hare spoke to the report.

The Temperance report made by Stewman was strong and spoken to by Stewman, Cumbie, Smith, Shaffer, Brewer, Wilkes, Johnson, and Hare. It was followed by a resolution asking the Legislature to use its best effort for prohibition in the State.

The report on Sabbath schools, by Pennington was good. It showed 13 schools existing among the churches; 64 teachers; 485 scholars; \$33.79 expended for literature. It was spoken to by Johnson and Whatley.

W. D. Smith in the report on Requests, called attention to the propriety of merging the District meetings, into 5th Sunday meetings, showing the advantages to be gained. It was agreed to.

The Finance Committee's report showed the receipt \$418.96. A committee on apportionment had been appointed consisting of F. M. Maxwell, N. S. Stone, S. F. Thomas, O. P. Lowery, and W. H. J. Stone, and their apportionment aggregated from the churches \$600.00.

The Executive Committee elected, consisted of J. S. Bentley, F. M. Maxwell, Pennington, and Cranford.

The Central Committee's report showed that Bro. Bledsoe having died, an arrangement had been made between the Liberty Association and the Central, to continue their joint work by employing Bro. T. H. Fargason, at a salary of \$500.00, the Liberty to pay \$300, the Central \$200. The committee expressed their satisfaction with Bro. Fargason's work. He had served 253 days; traveled 1797 miles; preached 71 sermons; sold books to the value of \$391.35; and did an amount of other work.

W. J. D. Upshaw was elected delegate to the Southern Baptist Convention.

J. D. Hughes from State of Religion, showed a good condition existing.

The circular letter by Bro. Bentley was full of good thoughts on our practical Christian duties.

The death roll showed the loss of two brethren who had been active workers, D. M. Harris and J. C. Wall.

Baptized 175; letter 75; restored etc. 36; dismissed 136; excluded 36; died 20. Total 371, showing a loss of just 100.

1889.

The 45th session was held with Good Hope church from Oct and to 4th, 1889. The sermon was preached by Z. D. Roby from 1st Cor. 3:9. Two new churches, New Providence, and Hollins were added. They are both located near Goodwater. Hollins did not continue its existence long, for want of proper help in her infancy. New Providence still preserves its existence, and though weak has been a good exemplary body under the pastorate of Bro. Conger. New ministers, C. S. Johnson, W. R. Whatley, and A. C. Swindal. Each of these men are good and useful minis-

vention to which the churches were requested to send messengers, the committee to fix the time and place for holding the first meeting. It was spoken to by R. W. Upshaw, Pennington, Bryant and Jarman. The committee fixed Rockford as the place, Nov. 6th, Sunday as time, Hastie as president, Upshaw vice president and Martin secretary. This meeting was held according to appointment. The attendance was small, but the interest was fine. The organization was not kept up. Had it been, doubtless much good would have been accomplished.

The report on Bible and Colportage work was made by W. R. Miller; and it was a good report. It showed the work of Bro. Fargason for the year. It was about the same as last year, with some increase in some points.

Bro. Hastie preached at 11 o'clock.

The names of two young brethren appear in this minute for the first time, N. S. Walker, and A. D. Bentley. The last named from this time forward became a useful number of the body, and prominent in his county as Judge of Probate, following in the steps of father and grand-father. The mantle of father and grand-father seems to have fallen to him.

Hastie was elected as delegate to the Convention, and Upshaw alternate. It was ordered that any members of the churches in good standing at home be authorized to report themselves as correspondents to anybody with which we correspond when present. This was to save the tediousness and time of making appointments at the session.

The Executive Committee was J. C. Maxwell, T. P. Cranford, and A. D. Bentley. The work of Bro. Fargason, by resolution was endorsed, and he commended to the Executive Committee.

The formal circular letter was dispensed with, and substituted by a letter of greeting from the Moderator and Clerk.

Baptized 158; letter 96; restored, etc., 29; dismissed 95; excluded and erased 74; dead 23; total 2312. Contributions \$451.24. No dead reported for this or the following year.

1891.

The 57th session was held with Mt. Olive church, Sept. 30th, to Oct. 2nd, 1891. Sermon by Bro. Upshaw from Joshua 17.

The new churches were Friendship, near Tallassee, Pleasant Hill, Tallassee, and Town Creek, in Elmore. New ministers, L. W. H. Walker, Wm. Harman, and J. M. Stroud. Of these ministers Bro. Harman is giving himself successfully to the work, in Elmore county. He was for years in Tallassee.

The former officers were again re-elected. Bro. Whatley was to preach to-night. The correspondents were Hare of the Alabama Baptist, J. M. Walker of State Board, Roby of Bible and Colportage Board, Fargason, Missionary, Colporter, and Wilkes and Steeley of Coosa River.

The report on State Missions was by Upshaw; Foreign Missions by Whatley; none on Home, and none on Bible and Colportage, but a resolution on it, recognizing the importance of the work of the Board at Opelika. The several subjects were forcibly presented in speeches from Waller, Hare, and Roby. All money undirected was agreed to be paid over to Bible and Colportage Board. Fargason and Whatley continued the discussion in the afternoon. About \$222 were pledged for the next year.

The report and subject of Sabbath schools was spoken to by Pennington, Wilkes and Whatley.

The circular letter was by Bro. Upshaw, and urged to an awakening zeal in the Master's service.

One of the old brethren of long connection with the association died this year, Bro. R. C. Goodgame. While many good sisters died, highly esteemed in their neighborhoods, two who were well known through the association because of their frequent attendance upon its meetings and their hearty interest in its affairs, made them well known and loved—these were sisters Mary L. Pennington and Emma L. Stewman. They were daughters of J. S. Bentley, and granddaughters of I. W. Sutcliffe, two men devotedly loved by the whole association. These sisters were comparatively young, but circumstances had brought them into close relation with the churches of Christ. They were devoted, hospitable, liberal and lovable; and their death was felt to be a loss to the association as well as the church of their membership.

Baptized 107; letter 70; restored etc, 38; dismissed 146; excluded 45; died 24; total 2345.

1890

In its 46th session the body met with the Providence church, Coosa Co., Oct. 1st, 1890. Sermon by D. I. Purser, Financial Secretary of Howard College, from 2 Tim. 1:12. The old officers were re-elected. The correspondents were Fargason, Steeley, Purser, and J. M. Kallin of Alabama Baptist. After appointment of committees, and hearing the announcement that Geo. E. Mize would preach at 11 A. M. tomorrow, the association adjourned. A. C. Swindal conducted devotional exercises in the morning of Thursday.

The reports on Missions were then read. State, by S. F. Thomas; Home, by Upshaw; Foreign, by Pennington. These were all good reports, showing what was being done, and that the amount spent for Foreign Missions was yielding better results than that expended at home. These were discussed by Purser and Fargason; when they were deferred for the present to allow Purser to present his work for Howard College. There being no report upon education, he discussed the subject upon general propositions, and then called for negotiable notes for the benefit of the College, and secured them to the amount of \$550, in three annual payments.

The ease with which larger amounts were promised and larger collections made in the past few years showed how the benevolent sentiment was growing with the people, especially when compared with the larger amounts given by other associations, better organized.

Bro. Mize preached at 11 o'clock.

In the afternoon the discussion upon Missions was resumed, by Brethren Upshaw, Martin and others. The pledges amounted to \$315.

Two new ministers appear on the roll, J. H. Calley and J. S. Jones. Jones promised much, but death cut him down at the threshold.

The report on Temperance by Jas. Walker, was spoken to by Norrell, J. H. Hickman, Pennington, R. H. Gullege, Avant and Hastie.

In the report on the State of Religion, Bro. Hastie states that nothing has made more rapid advance in the United States than religion, and that our own state and association, are keeping abreast with the movement.

Bro. Hughes preached in the afternoon and a collection for Bro. Colley was taken amounting to \$26.75.

A good report was read on Sabbath Schools by J. F. Edwards, and a resolution adopted to provide a committee for the purpose of organizing a Sabbath School Con-

That of Temperance, by C. S. Johnson, Upshaw, Hickman, Hare, Wilkes, Roby, and Pruitt.

The Finance Committee reported the reception of \$407.79. \$55.93 for Foreign Missions. No report being prepared on Education, it was brought up under a resolution, to which Bro. Roby spoke; and then took in pledges and cash for dormitories at Howard \$155, and for Ministerial Education \$87.31.

A good report on the State of Religion was made by Bro. Hickman, and spoken to by Brethren Wilkes and Pruett.

A resolution offered by Bro. C. S. Johnson substituted 5th Sunday meetings, called Minister's and Deacon's meetings for the old District Meetings. Where these have since been attended they have proved very interesting. In fact no meetings are better calculated to benefit the neighborhoods where held, or the parties attending them, than these, when properly used.

A collection of \$18.00 for Bro. Colley, and one for Bro. Steeley, (amount not given) was taken.

The report of the Central Committee, by Bro. A. D. Bentley, that Bro. Fargason's work had been continued with similar success, but not quite so good as formerly. Addresses were made by Brethren Fargason, Upshaw, Hickman, and Fuller. It was then ordered that the work be discontinued for the next year.

The Central Committee consisted of Pennington, A. D. Bentley, Geo. W. Davis, Hastie was elected delegate to Southern Baptist Convention, and Martin and C. S. Johnson alternates.

Baptized 131; letter 93; restored etc. 33; dismissed 104; excluded etc. 57; died 17. Total 2765.

1892.

The 48th session was held with Liberty church, Sept. 28-30, 1892. The sermon was preached by J. D. Hughes, John, 10-27. No new churches. The former officers were re-elected. The correspondents were T. B. Fargason from the Liberty; G. S. Anderson representing the Home, and Bible and Colportage Boards; and Geo. E. Brewer the Board of Ministerial Education, and the Alabama Baptist. The 9th order of business in relation to appointing Correspondents was stricken out.

Bro. Cumble presented the report on Temperance, which was ably discussed by various brethren. The report was a good one, and showed that much good had been accomplished by the agitation of the question, and the passage of prohibitory laws. The body adjourned at 11 A. M. to hear a sermon from Bro. Brewer.

In the afternoon Bible and Colportage work was discussed under a resolution, there being no report on the subject. The reports on the different missions as represented by the State, Home, and Foreign Boards were all discussed together with Bible and Colportage. The first was by Whitley; the second by Johnson, C. S.; the third by Upshaw. The reports were good and elicited good speeches from several brethren. The foreign report showed that while the Baptists had spent the preceding year only one-fourth as much money as the Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Campbellites, yet their increase in the foreign field had been more than all the others.

On the third day the report on Sunday schools by J. D. Hughes was spoken to in an efficient way by several brethren. That on the State of Religion was read by T. A. Kelly and spoken to by Whitley and Upshaw.

The report on Religious Literature, made some criticisms on the Alabama Baptist.

tist, and discriminations against the American Baptist Publication Society's literature. It was moved by Brewer to amend by striking out. This brought up quite a discussion between Brewer and Anderson, at whose suggestion the matter had been introduced. After protracted debate the Report was tabled. During the discussion the body adjourned to hear Bro. Anderson preach at 11 A. M., after which a collection of \$12.56 was taken for Bible and Colportage Board.

The report on Finance showed in cash and vouchers \$468.37. Of this amount \$113.24 was for Foreign Missions, the largest amount to this time, of which Alexander City gave more than half, and about one third of the whole for benevolence. The report on Education was made by L. T. Grogan, and was spoken to by several brethren.

Geo. F. Brewer was elected delegate to the Southern Baptist Convention, and L. H. Hastie alternate.

A balance of \$50.00 due Bro. Fargason was paid, and a donation to J. H. Colley also.

Several members died during this year, who had been prominent for years in the body. Eminent among them were R. B. Pruett, Ezariah Pinson, John S. Bentley, F. M. Maxwell, and sister Mary G. Posey, who never failed to make a good contribution to missions, though her church, as such, did little in this way.

Geo. F. Brewer having become pastor at Alexander City, was added to the ministry. Fifteen Sunday Schools reported.

Baptized 191; letter 125; restored etc. 22; dismissed 145; excluded 89; died 19. Total 2709.

1893

The 49th session was held with Eclectic church Sept. 27 to 29, 1893. Sermon by A. C. Swindal, from Matt. 5:16. Pleasant Ridge church joined. This church is in Elmore Co. J. H. Singleton and J. C. Thomas were added to the ministry. The correspondents were J. G. Harris, C. H. Morgan, J. P. Johnson and M. E. Parker. The reports on the several missions, and Bible and Colportage under resolution, were read and discussed by brethren Harris, Brewer, Upshaw, and Morgan, and a collection of \$14.61 taken for missions. During the discussion a recess was taken to hear a sermon from Bro. Morgan.

A committee of Jarman, Bryant and H. B. Young was appointed to consider the expediency of resuming Bible and Colportage work by the body. This committee recommended the resumption, but it was not carried into effect.

The report on State Missions was by J. C. Maxwell, on Home by J. J. Garret, on Foreign by Brewer. These were good reports showing what had been done by each during the year. The Foreign report called attention to the fact of this being the Centennial year of modern Missions, and the earnest efforts put forth by Baptists to do something to make the year monumental of the growth and success for the one hundred years. That the English Baptists had reached and passed the mark at which they aimed; \$500,000, the Northern Baptists had nearly reached theirs, \$1,000,000; while the Southern Brethren had not reached half way theirs, \$500,000; but Alabama had nearly reached the amount asked of her, \$15,000.

The report on Education by C. S. Johnson was a good one, and spoken to by Bro. Harris. Bro. F. W. Powell was chosen as beneficiary of the association, and \$131.20 was promised for him.

A good report on Sunday Schools was made by Bro. O. C. Swindal, and good

speeches were made upon it. The same may be said of that on Temperance by A. C. Swindal.

S. F. Thomas, T. P. Moon and D. F. Avant were made the Central Committee. The Orphans Home at the instance of Geo. E. Brewer was heartily endorsed, and commended, and the churches asked to make regular contributions.

L. H. Hastie was elected delegate to Southern Baptist Convention and Brewer alternate.

Three good 5th, Sunday meetings had been held, which were much enjoyed and profitable. One at Alexander City, one at Eclectic, and one at Bethesda.

The report on Finance by S. F. Thomas showed that \$59.98 had been contributed. Alexander City again gave about one third the amount.

Baptized 312; letter 146; restored 27; dismissed 158; excluded 47; dead 32. Total 2590.

1894.

The fifteenth session was held with Lebanon church Oct. 2 to 5th, 1894. The attendance was large. The sermon was preached by Bro. Wm. Harmon from 2 Cor. 5:14. New ministers C. J. Bentley, and N. O. Dobbs. The same officers were re-elected. Correspondents, J. G. Harris, Steeley and Morgan.

The preaching was done by Elders Brewer, Hastie, and Morgan. Again the sermon by Bro. Brewer was asked for publication, but it was not furnished. Collection \$18.40.

The report on Religious Literature by J. H. Colly was read and discussed by Harris, Brewer, and C. J. Bentley.

The report on State Missions by Brewer, on Home by Harmon, and on Foreign by Pennington, were read, and furnished clearly the facts in these different fields. They were well discussed, and more enthusiasm aroused in behalf of missions than ever before shown by the body. All the pastors by a rising vote agreed to take monthly collections. The churches promised about \$450 for the year, leaving out those making no promise.

Reports were made by S. F. Thomas on Bible and Colportage work; on Sabbath schools by C. J. Bentley; on Temperance by O. C. Swindal; on state of Religion by T. A. Kelley; on education by L. H. Hastie. These reports were generally exceptionally good, never having been better, as a whole, in the history of the association. That of O. C. Swindal on Temperance is worthy of preservation. The Finance Committee, through O. P. Bentley, showed \$533.75 contributed, and of this \$126.23 for Foreign Missions leading any former one for this object.

Henry Norrell, R. S. Penton, and R. M. Murchison Central Committee. A collection of about \$34.00 was made for brethren Steeley and Colley, and the churches were asked to send annually for him \$50.00. Powell was continued as the beneficiary for education. Among the dead of this year were two well known and useful sisters, Elizabeth Pennington Bentley, and Fannie Pennington.

Baptized 171; letter 121; restored etc. 33; dismissed 191; excluded 63; died 23. Total 2911. Thus ended the semi-Centennial year, with several marks of advance which inspire with good hope for the future—the largest gift for Foreign Missions, the promise of regular collections; and the marked presence of the Holy Spirit throughout the session. A more harmonious and inspiring session has never been held.

This closes the history of the Central Association for its first fifty years. These years were marked by wonderful changes. They commenced with a wild unsettled

country from which the Indians had but recently removed. Rich forests covered the earth. Vast stretches of pine would have furnished immense quantities of lumber of the finest grade. Wild game abounded, and the people could easily supply their tables by their guns with a bounteous supply of meat; while their cattle, sheep, hogs, and horses were fat from the pasturage of grass, cane, and wild peas; with which the hills and valleys were covered. Photography, telegraphy, and hundreds of discoveries that have added so much to the pleasures of life have all come into vogue during the time. Nearly all the railroads and steam vessels that now carry people with such rapidity have been constructed. Weapons of war are but little resemblance to those of that day, so much have they been improved. Then it was thought a privilege that a Christian might exercise without sin to contribute to mission work. Now it is regarded a duty so imperative that it is a sin to neglect to do it. Then but little was known of those parts of the world that now are sources of richest revenue to the world in gold, silver, and other minerals, in tea, and precious stones, together with fruits and other products that have made living luxuries. Portions of the world then savage have become christianized, and sprung from barbarism to high Christian civilization. The missionaries were then few, and but feeling their way. Now there are thousands of them, and many strong flourishing churches exist in these then unexplored fields. A few thousand dollars were then contributed by Christians for missions, now many millions are given. Then but few educated men filled our pulpits, now they are numerous. Then the Baptists owned but few institutions of learning of high grade, and these were feebly supported, now they possess more in number, and some better endowed and equipped than any other denomination in the United States. Then large numbers of slaves were owned, but these are now all free, and can walk up beside their former masters and bid their votes at the ballot box.

But amid all these changes this association has had belonging to it 80 ordained preachers, and 58 churches. There have been reported to it by the churches in her bounds 7,136 baptisms, and 6282 additions by letter. There has been contributed to denominational work, besides home expenses \$32,730.29. But what is this compared with what might have been done? There is scarcely a member so poor but could have given more than the average which has been contributed, and some single churches could have given about as much as the whole body has given and been none the poorer.

But let us think God for what has been wrought, and try to make the future a better expression of our love to Christ and humanity. Let the light that has dawned so brightly upon the pathway of duty and God's providence so move us to consecration to him that hath redeemed us by his blood, as that the next fifty years that shine upon the history of this association shall be as the noonday brightness to early dawn when its work is contrasted with the fifty past.

From the association have sprung five men, Bozeman, Shaffer, Thompson, Stott, and Brewer who have impressed themselves not only upon their associations, but their States, and the Southern Baptist Convention also. Shaffer has been much honored by places of trust in the State Convention. McCord, Upshaw, and C. J. Smith have also taken prominent positions in the State. Martin, Job son, and C. J. Bentley are likely to be more widely known. Jas. L. Jones was fast rising when death struck him down. These all started here.

CORRECTIONS.

Page 8, line 6, "permanent" should be "prominent."
Page 9, line 42, "reviewed" should be "revived."
Page 25, line 27, "in" should be "as."
Page 29, line 5, "thorough" should be "throughout."
Page 34, line 35, "Wilson" should be "Weston."
Page 35, line 41, "sacced" should be "sacred."
Page 39, line 7, "one" should be "no."

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